THE COMMONWEAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Nobody Knows 665
Week by Week 666
What the Farmer Needs 669
Believe and Buy 670
A Point or Two about Novelists.....Henri Massis 671
Old Age of Thomas the Rhymer *(verse)*.....
Maire Nic Pilip 673
The High Lights of Humanism...George N. Shuster 674
Power and Public Regulation.....John C. O'Brien 676
The Stage Door.....Claude Bragdon 678
Two Worlds Meet in Rothenburg.....Louis Golding 680
Which Way Writing?.....John Chamberlain 682
Poems.....Melville Cane, Catherine Moore, Robert Haven Schauffler, Gouverneur Paulding, Margery Mansfield, Dorothy Belle Flanagan 683
The Play.....R. Dana Skinner 684
Communications 685
Among the Spring Books.....Paul Crowley, Boyd-Carpenter, Padraic Colum, Charles Phillips, Ernest Brennecke, jr., Vincent Engels, Shaemas O'Sheel, Margaret Kendall, Mary Kolars, Harry McGuire, Grenville Vernon, Roderick Gill 687

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NOBODY KNOWS

HOW to swallow prohibition resignedly is a puzzle for which we can find no answer. Things would be immeasurably simpler if the dogs of drought sometime barked up the right tree. But the infallible wrongness of enforcement methods is a phenomenon at which one can only stare in exasperated wonder. Recent activities on the high seas; recent cowardly murder in Aurora; recent terroristic justice in Michigan, against which the conscience of the commonwealth has finally rebelled—these are items indicative of the quality of the program, and cannot be defended in the light of any American principle. But though they savor of primitive and innately lawless fanaticism, they are not so impressive as certain recent revelations of congressional thirst. The Michaelson-Morgan incidents make clear the real status of the whole prohibitory business.

We have no wish to make these representatives of the people any guiltier than the evidence proves them to be. In all likelihood no conviction of Mr. Morgan could ever be effected, though he manifestly declared himself the proud importer of sundry stimulating bottles. There is every reason to believe that his proprietary statement was correct, since it alone explains the trouble he took to shoo customs officials away from his baggage. As a matter of fact, he is described as threatening to use his Washington influence if the private possessions of his friends were scrutinized. One concludes, therefore, that Mr. Morgan was (at the very least) entirely willing to pose as a breaker of the law—and likewise content, incidentally, to wheedle the customs authorities out of insisting upon another law. But how can all this be? Mr. Morgan came to the nation's rescue with a vote in behalf of the Jones bill at a time when "contempt for the Eighteenth Amendment was undermining all government." He was elected the spokesman of sundry Ohioans for whom alcohol is more sinister than the plague. It is difficult to believe that so thoroughly committed, so sternly legalistic, a man could actually have been carting Mum's extra-dry. Possibly he was having his little joke at the expense of the customs authorities!

With such jokes our country now hums from one end to the other. There is the Cabinet member who turned dry and Secretary during the same afternoon. There are those dauntless solons who, collectively, induced Senator Reed to believe that occasionally they

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investigated the difference between a Manhattan and a Martini. There is the earnest Wisconsin reformer who, in the face of a 125,000 majority for a pro-beer referendum, hopes to persuade the legislature that it must by no means express the public will. Indeed, the supply of prohibitive humor is unending. It governs the captain of industry who feels convinced, after his sixth cocktail, that Mr. Volstead has served the people well. It bubbles out of a thousand pulpits which advocate drought in the name of Christ—Who drank wine and offered it to others. But like almost all other forms of mirth, this too has its limits. Hypocritical legislators who pass laws they themselves do not obey are that thing over and above a villain which the word "cheat" conveys. And when one recalls such matters as the Aurora tragedy, one sees in appalling clarity that nemesis which attends the close of the fantastic parade of stupid rigorism, moral dishonesty and indifference to the right operation of the public will.

WEEK BY WEEK

TARIFF revision, which is to share honors with farm relief during the special session, will present its most important problem in the consideration of the sugar schedules. These are intimately bound up with the policy of the United States in the Philippine Islands, which ought therefore to govern the current deliberations. The matter is obviously of sufficient import to warrant a separate consideration by both the executive and legislative branches in Washington. If sugar importation from the islands is made dutiable, a decided blow will be struck at their prosperity, and any curtailment of prosperity necessarily means a postponement of independence. Henry L. Stimson, ex-Governor-General of the Philippine Islands and the new Secretary of State, is emphatic in his condemnation of such action. Upon his return to this country he characterized "the attempt to restrict freedom of trade between the islands and the United States" as "about the worse possible backward step that could be taken in American policy"; asserting that "so long as we retain these islands under the [American] flag, we are in duty bound to give them the advantage of trade with the home country," and voicing the hope that we would not return to the outmoded and inethical doctrine of colonial relations which held that colonies "existed solely for the benefit of the mother country and could be exploited at will by that country."

Sugar in Politics

NEVERTHELESS domestic interests advocate, at the minimum, the limitation of duty-free sugar from the Philippines to approximately 500,000 tons annually, and Senator Smoot of Utah, chairman of the finance committee which has jurisdiction over the tariff bill, is in favor of this proposal in conjunction with an increased world rate on the product. Senator Broussard of Louisiana, where extensive cane fields flourish, is even more tender of domestic interests, demanding that "we tax every pound of sugar that comes from the Philippine Islands." On the other hand Senator King, who serves the same beet-growing state as Senator Smoot, and Senator Norris of Kansas, are convinced that this plan cannot "be defended upon the principles of honor and morality which should guide the conduct of a Christian nation." Apparently the lines of battle in Congress are clearly drawn. The opinion of the country, the effect on our trade relations in the Orient, the opposition of the administration to any change in the present tariff relations between the United States and the far East, the undesirability of altering our policy in the Philippines, should—even if idealistic codes of colonial practice do not—guide the legislators in Washington.

ON THIS side of the water it is likely that Ambassador Herrick will be remembered chiefly because he saw the diplomatic opportunities in Lindbergh, and began so promptly and surely the building up of an essential legend. But in France he will be remembered for a thousand things testifying to the affection in which he held that land; like Benjamin Franklin's, his memory will be greener there than in his own country. And as with Franklin, the French will probably always be fond of pretending that he was not quite credible to them. They have often said it was strange that such a man should be the product of America. This was a favorite declaration during the bitterest days of the debt controversy, when uncomplimentary references to America were prefaced, interrupted or closed with the proviso that the evil word did not apply to "Papa Herrick," who was to be accepted, personally and officially, to the uttermost. That ill feeling eventually died out is due, at least partly, to the fact that his presence in Paris reminded some of the most hot-headed that they could not generalize too much about the United States. Even now, it will not be considered that Premier Poincaré was too emphatic when he spoke of "that fine and good man in whose features France will recognize not only those of an active friend, but some of the most winning characteristics of America itself."

Ambassador Herrick

FOR a dictator, Primo de Rivera seems a mild, congenial soul, and we have no wish to embarrass him. But it is high time that someone proclaimed him the world's champion publicity man. In this respect he is worlds ahead of the Italian gentleman to whom, in other respects, he is sometimes unfavorably compared. For we have yet to see any publicity which exhibits him, personally, in an injudicious light, while goodness knows the Signor Mussolini has not always had such good fortune. When a man is referred to in such im-

What a Man!

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mortal company as Caesar, Judas Maccabeus and Alexander the Great, some doltish minds may be impressed, but the wise man goes his way with a shaking of the head. That is what is happening every day to the legend of Il Duce. But consider the strong man of Spain. He has just put down a mutiny of the students. Does he order any executions? Does he shout "Traitors"? No. He expands with forgiveness. He says, in effect, "They are young, full of a beautiful but mistaken courage. Very nice boys. We will close the University of Madrid, and send them to other schools for a year." But this is news. Correspondents flock to Madrid. The dictator elaborates his analysis of the movement. "I am convinced that any impartial observer—" here he pauses, recollects that an international exposition is to be held in Barcelona very soon, opens a parenthesis—"and I hope that many will come to Spain as tourists this summer" —closes the parenthesis, and continues "will soon be convinced by what he sees that the people are well content with the present government." What a man!

Safety at Sea

WITHOUT placing too heavy a burden upon shipholders, the International Safety Conference which opens in England this week hopes to formulate some needed revisions of the 1914 convention for the safety of life at sea. There must be new regulations to prevent collisions, and to dispose of the derelict problem; there must be a revision of radio regulations which will not, however, impose wireless equipment and an operator upon every fisherman's tug. The objection to the suggestions of the American committee for the location of large and small compartments in the hull to prevent listing, and the construction of additional bulkheads for buoyancy, is that the measure of safety which they will contribute to shipping is not in proportion to the expense. It is an objection which may be overcome by the memory of the Vestris, and a very general demand that some immediate action be taken to prevent a similar tragedy. Since nothing better seems to have been offered up to the present, the American proposals appear sound enough, especially if they are applied to passenger ships alone, and not enforced upon freight carriers.

Aspects of Crime Fighting

WHAT to do about crime keeps on puzzling everybody. Offenses against the law have increased greatly during the past two years. The more beating on the drum, the more disregard for the guardians of order—this seems to be the formula. Recently the police commissioners of several large cities have announced a policy of "persecuting" the "criminal class" into a change of residence. Two means seem to be particular favorites: continuous arrests, designed to keep the potential wrong-doer on the move; and the third degree, which extracts confessions without the use of anything like novocaine. The first has been attacked in a recent charge to a New York grand jury by Judge Martin, who averred that "nobody has the right or power to arrest a man who has done nothing wrong, and against whom there is nothing but his past record, for which he has paid the price demanded by the state." Thus reasonable justice is conserved, in one place at least, against the encroachments of imperious reform. The second method is under fire in the current Outlook, where an article by Mr. Charles J. V. Murphy summarizes some relatively less familiar evidence bearing upon arbitrary police brutality. Citizens might well give some attention to both criticisms, however anxious they may be to root out criminal activities. No sound and lasting reform has ever been effected by a club wielded by a society which (in a manner totally different from Saint Denis's) has lost its power to reason calmly.

A Social Endowment

A NOTABLE concert in New York earlier this week was the means of attracting the attention of many people in the metropolitan district to the appeal of the Fordham School of Sociology and Social Service for endowment. So many demands have been made for workers from this school by social welfare agencies that expansion is more than feasible; but expansion, of course, requires money. Not a great deal is asked, however. Half a million dollars will enable the school to develop the work it has been doing this last decade to a point where its influence might be profoundly felt throughout the welfare organizations of the East. To those in the Catholic tradition the provision of training facilities free from the social sophistries is surely a purpose of the highest merit, while of importance to any good citizen is the development of the only school in the East that unites the newest in sociology, criminology and psychiatry with the magnificent traditions of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Francis de Sales.

Defining Mysticism

YEARS of interest in the mystics have not been without their effect upon formal philosophy, which for so long a time was content to be merely rationalistic. In a recent address Jacques Chevalier, well known in this country for his studies of Bergson and Pascal, came near to formulating a theory of mystical insight in precise terms. This insight would seem to be (he said) a natural faculty which, however much it may be enriched by grace, is nevertheless a power native to man and can be tested thoroughly through experience. Just as there is a subliminal consciousness, which rises to the surface in activity and plays a great rôle in invention—as witness the old truth that one sometimes rises in the morning with the answer to a problem which had seemed wholly baffling the night before —so also there is an ultraliminal consciousness. This

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is not superior to reason, the immediate sovereign of all our acts, but it does see farther than reason because, though lacking in clarity, it is more profound. No human being is without this consciousness, but often it may never be utilized or suffered to survive the pressure of active living. On the other hand certain souls manifest it in a highly developed state. They are the mystics par excellence, and by studying them one can learn how to discover the ultraliminal realm, inexhaustibly rich and beneficial. In the opinion of M. Chevalier, the Spanish mystics are, from this point of view, our most illustrious examples.

FEW men had a deeper regard for individuality than the Baron von Hügel. And yet he was constantly aware of how calamitous a thing it is to confuse "good intention" and "good work"—which is so frequently identified in our time. The following little paragraph from Letters to a Niece (which we shall notice soon) is particularly appropriate: "The second great fact or law of human life is that good faith and the effects of our view and decisions (upon ourselves and others) are strikingly incommensurate. A child is taken over a factory—in the best good faith it puts its hand into the machinery—its good faith in no wise saves it from its own quite sincere but entirely ignorant action. No doubt in more purely spiritual and moral matters, good faith does more or less neutralize some of the effects of inexperience, precipitation and so forth—but it does not neutralize them entirely. All this means that we will strive to make the young feel more and more that 'sincerity' is indeed a one most necessary virtue for them; but that 'docility' is quite as necessary a virtue."

Sincerity and Sense

CATHOLICS who pay no attention to special appeals for missionary effort under the impression that the ordinary revenues are sufficient for the purpose will do well to consider, among other things, the prediction that allocations to the missions this year from the receipts of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith will not exceed $2,500,000 where $50,000,000 is needed. Manifestly, even with the scantiest of provender for themselves, the missionaries cannot make one dollar do the work of twenty-five, and their reliance must be placed upon special contributions. It is not an ideal situation, as the magazine Catholic Missions points out in its current issue, but the missionaries should not be made to suffer for it, nor their work handicapped on that account. Indeed it holds forth this assurance: that because of the very scarcity of finances in the mission field, a benefactor may be justified in feeling that his money will do its full share of the work. Wherever the missionaries go, churches, schools and hospitals are erected with almost incredible economy. And the need for increasing support is as strikingly shown by the fact that hundreds of missions want the simplest of equipment for lack of a few hundred dollars.

Help for the Missions

THE battle between admirers of the talkies and of the silent cinema shows no abatement. The former continue to point to the effect of reality contributed by sound, and to the dramatic possibilities opened up by the employment of this extra medium. But, as The Commonweal argued some time ago, the brief for reality is false, since it is less rather than more natural that pictures should speak; and the argument for drama is invalid, since if the use of sound does lend to the film some few of the values of the stage, the necessary pauses in action destroy that smoothness and unity of movement which is the dramatic merit of the best of the silent movies. What the talkie becomes is something nearer to a vaudeville revue than to any other of its predecessors in the theatre. Yet because of the stimulus it has given to popular interest in the films, and the size of the box-office receipts it has been able to attract so far, most of the power and the capital in the industry are hastening to its side. Among the artists there is division of opinion. The New York Times quotes Mr. Charles Chaplin as avowing enmity to talking pictures. In the Christian Science Monitor, we note an article by Miss Mary Pickford (Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks) offering allegiance to them. Now in this case, as in all others, many good men will side with the under dog, with the truer artist, with the friend of the poor and the downtrodden; also in this case, as is not their invariable procedure, with New York against Boston. In other words, with Mr. Charles Chaplin, and against (but not without certain regrets) the lady.

Concurring with Chaplin

THESIS subjects are giving the upper castes of collegedom more and more concern. Almost all the Greek particles have already been written about, and Greek is rather a bore anyway. We commend the ingenuity of Miss Nellie Vedder, who recently earned a degree in the University of Chicago with a dissertation on dishwashing. She discovered that the ideal way of cleansing china got everything into the cupboard in twenty-two minutes, thirty-one seconds. This being the age of servant problems, Miss Vedder's work ought to interest even more people than want to learn How to Think under the guidance of Canon Dimnet. The only hitch is that, if one has learned how to be happy through thinking, an hour over the dishes is a trifle light as air. While on the subject of theses and waste motion, we may suggest the great possibilities offered by our old friend the army. Military men are among the best of fellows, but their system is really a bit odd—and ever so anti-Tayloristic. Recently an officer

Dishwashing and Ten Cents

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at headquarters ordered a copy of this magazine, which was dispatched to him promptly with a bill. The following letter from the Finance Office of the Finance Department, United States of America, was thereupon received: "Herewith returned is your invoice in amount of $.10, with the request that the certificate entered thereon be signed at the place indicated by X by a representative of your firm, showing his official capacity; also the invoice should be rendered in triplicate and returned to this office for payment." We didn't mind looking for X; but when we remembered Miss Vedder's discovery that the dishes could be disposed of with 1,015 motions, we wondered if some earnest research worker could not take pity on the army.

Brander Matthews

BRANDER MATTHEWS was frankly a New Yorker of the old school. He was something of a drama lover, something of an epicure, something of a professor; but the whole which these fractions comprised was an alert gentleman not always right but invariably interesting. If a very especial laurel wreath were set aside for him it would probably be conferred by reason of his success in bringing the drama into education. During the time when plays were considered not only very wicked but also terribly frivolous, he reminded academia of the lore and learning of the stage. The Dramatic Museum at Columbia University is probably the best of the concrete proofs he advanced to make his point. Others can be found in the writing he himself did and the work he encouraged others to undertake. The most useful of all this is neither imaginative nor critical but "professorial" in just the right way. Exposition of what the theatre meant, of what it was and had been, restored to the footlights their humanistic appeal. Today the colleges are redolent of drama, experimental and otherwise. Not a few of the initiates forget that what they are attempting would probably never have become possible but for the witty, somewhat old-fashioned sage who really talked to the United States from his pulpit on Morningside Heights.

Science Versus the Musician

THE progress of science has brought in its wake many advantages to musicians. The phonograph, the radio and the cinema have given employment to new thousands and increased revenue throughout the entire rank of singers and instrumentalists. Now science has turned from them and the brief decade of great prosperity is over. The sound screen has already made serious inroads on the orchestras of the film houses and Mr. Arthur Hammerstein, producer of musical plays, has announced a procedure which, according to the American Federation of Musicians, constitutes one of the gravest problems yet presented. For his next production Mr. Hammerstein proposes to utilize the synchronization devices of the sound screen, which will automatically eliminate the pit orchestra. The project may run temporarily afoul of the difficulty of timing a mechanical recording device with the varying performances of living players, but that obstacle is one which experiment and training can certainly eliminate. What has induced Mr. Hammerstein to take this particular step is the irritation (not confined to himself) occasioned by the drastic regulations which the Federation has forced on them. No one can dispute the economic justness of Mr. Hammerstein's escape from a heavy expense, which has been made more onerous by the necessity of paying for unearned services. It would be well for the musicians, when they assemble for their national convention in May, to reconsider their attitude toward the goose that lays the golden eggs.

WHAT THE FARMER NEEDS

AS NOTHING more than an example of the progress which the best minds are making toward farm relief, we cite the fact that the new administration's first utterance on the subject completely reverses the viewpoint elucidated at the Republican convention of 1920. Where Mr. Lodge declared nine years ago that "every effort should be made to increase productivity of the farms," Secretary Hyde now finds it "desirable to insist that no operations should be supported which would stimulate increased production." And so we have learned one thing, at least, during the decade: that the bit, rather than the spur, is what the farmers need. That agriculture will move ahead quickly and easily when encouraged by high prices was amply shown during the war, but it meant nothing until later events demonstrated the further proposition that it cannot retreat when prices are low. Too much is involved. It will expand when expansion is necessary, but it cannot contract with any grace.

Now it has sometimes been suggested that such a flexibility could be lent the industry by a regulated flow of man-power from the farms to the cities and back again at the necessary times. Naturally enough, the idea has found no welcome among the farmers. It could be applied only by an agency of infallible judgment and despotic powers which could accurately predict both yield and demand, and apportion labor to the farms accordingly. In one year it would mean the exodus of perhaps 10 percent of farm labor to the cities, and the year after the return to rusticity of 2 percent. To suppose that such a system could work smoothly and without friction would be to expect entirely too much of government.

More reasonable demands on legislation are presumed by the Federal Farm Board which Secretary Hyde outlined to the agricultural committees of Congress. This "instrumentality," as he calls it, would keep farmers on their farms, and would look for their

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relief toward an adjustment of distribution which would level out surplus and scarcity. It would utilize, for this purpose, the experience gained by coöperative marketing associations. "We should take no action which would tend to supplant them or to undermine their growth," declared Mr. Hyde. "It is largely upon these organizations that we should build the collective action of the farmer." And he indicated that there would be no lack of financial support.

Note how all this catches at farm sentiment. It says No to increased production, but at the same time, No to depopulation of the rural districts. It approves the line of effort along which farm leaders have been working consistently for the past decade. It conciliates the marketing associations. It promises, on paper at least, control of produce by the farmers themselves, and minimizes the bogy of bureaucracy.

Despite the size of the task, we believe that such supervision as Secretary Hyde contemplates over an industry whose needs vary with every locality, even with every unit, can eventually be worked out. But the question which every farmer will be asking five months from now is, How soon? Can it be expected to provide relief within the next three or four years? Is it for the present as well as for the future? The tone of Secretary Hyde's declaration inclines us to be dubious. "We are blazing new trails. . . . The instrumentality must be clothed with broad and general authority"—details must wait.

BELIEVE AND BUY

THE reputation of homo sapiens (which title, we need to remember, is self-made) for curiosity is fairly well established. It was a prominent characteristic of life in paradise, and has prospered ever since in direct ratio to the increase in population. So well-known a matter would hardly deserve mention were it not for the immediate quandaries of American business. Years ago the Chicago Tribune began to call itself "the world's greatest newspaper" because of the number of its advertising columns. Today, when printed literature of every sort is more widely distributed and more effectively organized, the worthiness of that definition is proved. The success of a journal can be measured by its power to interest people so mightily in things they do not possess that nothing short of a payment down will soothe. And when you wish to gauge this power's present collective actuality, you have only to observe how definitely results follow its application.

Last year, for instance, the sovereign people smoked more than 105,000,000,000 cigarettes, despite many lingering suspicions that these trim narcotic trifles injure health. So vast a total could not have been reached, of course, without feminine coöperation. But what induced woman to smoke? Doubtless there are several causes, but not the least influential has been the string of millions paid out by tobacco companies for posters and pages. Last year the sum total was $5,220,286—almost sufficient to endow a stadium with a university attached. Naturally enough this money was expended methodically. A stunt relatively old was resurrected with skill, and personal endorsements did the work. Those who have marveled that, in order to keep fit, an army man must choose his brand with care, or that a prima donna discovered how fatal to the tissues of a highly trained larynx are all nicotines save one, ought to bear in mind that the device was borrowed from one of the most conservative of business men—the publisher. His trade was, until recently, almost alone in appealing to the critic's opinion and (now and then) approval. But, though ethics in the realm of books are far from stainless, there still exists a convention that the critic is paid by somebody other than the publisher. It is exceedingly unlikely, however, that such as are publicly enthusiastic for Lucky Strikes, or Pond's products, or John Ward's shoes, draw their checks from the literary editor.

The question is, how long will curiosity withstand the press of current methods? After all, as experience shows, none of us is gullible forever, and often enough we acquire collective indignations which have the effect of dynamite on business. And so it is not surprising that Mr. Theodore F. McManus, acting solely as an advertising man, should have issued two full pages of warning in the form of a newspaper display. Having termed much of the product of his profession "a species of glorified rooster crowing," he made the point that although the appeal must be addressed to "mankind in the mass"—a mankind some thirty millions of which "exist almost exclusively upon a daily diet of Arthur Brisbane"—it must still be based, trite though the truth be, upon "respect for its clientele." This implies self-respect on the part of business itself, which might even be defined as a willingness to concede that a bank account cannot grow unhealthily any more than anything else can grow unhealthily. We commend Mr. McManus's views, not merely because they are right but because—however much one may dislike saying so—the expression of them is courageous.

There are no remedies for advertising manias any more than there exists a panacea for fads. But it is really an American trait to recall, over and above one's own affairs, the needs and aspirations of the country. People want things—from talcum powder to automobiles, from pipes to books—simply because they yearn to add something to the stature of their lives. No one can really be indifferent either to the intrinsic value of what they choose or to the honest quality of what is offered. Retrospectively considered, American business displays a remarkable advance from the cheap sharping of some decades ago. But if the devil of deceit walks into the house from which the imps of less gaudy crookedness have fled, the splendor of his dominion may be more ghastly than all the little glitter of his kin.

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A POINT OR TWO ABOUT NOVELISTS

By HENRI MASSIS

Fiction and morality have been at odds for a long time. Shall a novelist talk frankly about life? If not, how can he conserve an honest and untrammeled attitude toward life? These questions have been hotly debated. In the following paper Henri Massis—one of the most brilliant among younger French critics—answers them with great originality and force. The freedom of art, he says, can be restricted only by the basic laws of art. These are not dictated by the moralist, however, but are inherent in the world of being. Thus the debate is shifted to a higher and more appropriate level.—The Editors.

A GREAT many contemporary writers seem to think the Christian faith means "morality" and nothing else; and the objection is raised against Catholic doctrine in particular that it greatly restricts the freedom of art. I hold, on the other hand, that this doctrine effects, with incomparable success, the unity of the moral and the intellectual on a higher level, by adapting our lives to truth itself. But is it not apparent that many well-intentioned authors do allow an excellent moral purpose to substitute for first-rate technique or inspiration? Frequently enough, Catholic novelists have (one must confess) permitted themselves to alter their work, so that what had originally been dictated by the laws of art was, in the hope of being "improving," patched up with foreign elements. Examples of these additions are a desire to edify and the wish to speak with moral authority. The artist's business is obviously to make and to shadow forth. He does not explain; he renders real. He is not bent upon proving truths, establishing laws or justifying the moral code. If he succeeds in awakening a throng of ideas within us, the reason is that he has supplied a picture of life. The novel, to be specific, must not be born of a problem. The problem must grow out of the novel.

But shall a Catholic artist, we are asked, copy nature, which seems to be amoral, in the same way his unbelieving neighbor would? Or is he to ignore the requirements of art as that has been defined, and take up his work with dogmatic intentions? These questions conceal a fundamental misunderstanding. The Faith is not primarily a doctrine, an explanation, an ethic. It introduces a man to the whole of reality, and does not restrict him to that part which can be perceived by merely natural observation. Our artist's business, therefore, is to copy a nature sublimated by grace—not merely that bald and wholly material actuality which is reached by the senses, but that great, real world which is Divine, living and autonomous, which imposes itself upon the spirit and floods the heart. In short, he is to manifest a Catholic vision of the real, a vision which is broad and just precisely because it takes in more than that part of universal being which has been clouded by spiritual disgrace. It excludes nothing, includes everything, understands all.

When this manner of vision illuminates the creative activity of a Catholic artist, when he feeds his imagination upon a nature redeemed by grace, there is no doubt that a genuine philosophy, a true morality, emanate from his work. Unfortunately, Catholic writers too frequently dissociate their invention and their vision of the world, accepting for literary purposes as they do the same psychological principles, the same moral problems, as the man without faith, and then affixing to their stories some moral or teaching which conforms with their spiritual outlook. No one would fancy from studying their work that faith is more than a kind of way of looking at life or that it possesses other virtues than its interpretative value. But is not the world of faith, for the believer, the world of reality itself?

It is likewise true that many Catholic artists are only religious moralists. Their work is Catholic not in creative principle but in so far as the conclusions—the apologetic or expository inferences—are orthodox. They cling to a conception of art which is fundamentally the same as that which they reprove in their adversaries. By their example they lend support to those who contend that art and morality are antinomies, whereas "Christ draws all things which are in man unto Himself and reconciles all in the greatness of His heart."

Because it is not merely a moral doctrine but exists to aid its adherents in their pursuit of a spiritual and augustly Divine end, Catholicism offers the artist resources incomparably greater than those afforded by any other conception of life. Ordinary art does not, in effect, any more than workaday morality, appease that in us which is deepest and best. Paul Claudel has made this point exceedingly well:

> Strange though it may seem, natural morality is only a morality of renouncement. It is always expressed negatively. "Do not do this, do not do that; do not rob, do not drink." But why? The answer is mere idle gossip. The moralists quietly leave us alone in the doing of our little calisthenic exercises. In a similar fashion art has professed to find its only object in that which its devotees call "beauty." The advice is to place oneself in an attitude agreeable to those spectators one has particularly in mind, and to turn out something pleasing to them. It is an art stripped of all meaning and virtue, incapable of "composition" and unable to deal with the whole of man, the best in whom it leaves unnoticed while it itself ends in pessimism and the melancholy of impotence.
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> The force of Christianity lies, first of all, in the fact that it is a "principle of contradiction." Though its demands are apparently without measure or reason, they

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> are nevertheless the only ones really geared to the dimensions of our energies and our reason. They mutilate nothing, they call out to the whole man, to intelligence, will, sensibility; they oblige us to remain in a state of permanent mobilization against passions and facile doubts. This principle of contradiction is likewise necessary to art, and gives it the power to compose. The basic conflict which Christianity stirs up within us is at once the greatest dramatic force and the mightiest resource of our social and moral life.

It is from this point of view that Chesterton has been able to observe that there is nothing more romantic than the Catholic view of life. No novel can do without adventures or intrigues. And a philosophy which is either not interested in consequences or afraid to arrive at them is unable to suggest dramatic situations to the imagination. Where would one look for the romantic in the bleak desert of modern scepticism? On the other hand, a man who traverses that forest of doctrines which Catholicism is will discover more and more unsuspected routes. To the Christian, existence is a story which can end happily or unhappily. The central point in his outlook is man at the crossroads. Will he take this route or the other? This is the one important thing to discover, and the issue is rich with pathetic seriousness. And because he has sensed the significance of this crisis with fervor, a Catholic constantly speaks of "dangers." His creed is a foe of spiritual peace. It is an eternal critical moment, a constant battle in which the penalty for defeat is more ominous than death. What positive resources such a conception of life and of man offers the dramatist or novelist is, therefore, apparent. Here is the source of an intensity of meaning invaluable to the artist who lives to show life in action.

Failure to see in the Catholic point of view more than a code of morals means, therefore, signally restricting it and misunderstanding its aesthetic power. Nowhere is the fecundity of Catholicism more evident than in the realm of the artist, though we must unfortunately admit that Catholic critics are often merely negative. They stress the demands of morality as things sufficient unto themselves, in order to bombard an artist who does not share their moral point of view. Such criticism, far from combating that "antinomy" which prejudices so many in favor of the "liberty of art," really strengthens it, by making a distinction between the value of talent and the value of ideas or by rendering homage to the first while condemning the second. It would be in a far more advantageous position if it agreed to place itself upon the terrain of art, and then proceed to show that the deficiencies of the given production are primarily matters of the craft and due to a lack of respect for the principles of all sound thinking. One cannot, it is true, demand of every human creation that it be illuminated by the light of Revelation; but in so far as it itself is a created thing, subject to the control of the intelligence, it may desirably be examined to see if it makes manifest the laws of that intelligence. Baudelaire says:

> There is only one pernicious art—that which deranges the elements of life . . . and the first condition of a hale art is belief in the integral unity of all existence. [And again.] Is crime always punished and virtue invariably rewarded? No. But if your novel is well written, it will not incite anyone to break the laws of nature.

The best way to induce an artist to reflect upon large philosophical and religious verities is to persuade him that he must have come to some conclusion about them before he can possess, in the purely artistic sense, a good conscience. And one will have progressed far with this persuasion if one watches over, purifies, the artistic side of truth. Beyond any doubt a literary work which propagates unmitigated error may have been done with technical skill; but it does not exist as a work of art, it cannot arrive at form, style, composition, excepting in so far as it has utilized that which is true in the error it proposes. Thus works of art which scandalize us by reason of their intellectual miserableness are nevertheless formally correct, in so far as they respect the principles of identity and of contradiction which are basic to all human discourse.

Consequently, the artist who really thinks about the laws of his craft, and who extends these into the spiritual realm and so generalizes the maxims of his technique, will arrive at the first principles of all philosophy. It is only by a strange disregard for the method which he himself employs in order to work, and by a kind of infidelity to his art, that his spirit and heart can espouse those chimerical ideologies which undermine even his own creative activity. For in them there is deviation from verity, there is corruption.

By dissolving the specific unity of a work of art, by setting art and thinking, genius and ideas, in opposition (as is so often done) one risks intensifying and prolonging the misunderstanding which separates them. Frequently enough the idea or the moral (or immoral) intention which the most "independent" artist inserts into his work as he thinks best, will falsify, or even nearly destroy, that which is wholly sound in a work of art well done; but that degree of being in it, which is necessary, indispensable in order that form may be attained, gives the external coherence, the architecture, the shape, the apparent unity, to ideas which are, fundamentally, intellectually or emotionally chaotic. Thus the discourse, which is faithful to the norms of logic, seems superior to that which it expresses. Formed as he is by thinkers who supply him with powerful arguments, the author may, of course, resist all attempts to convince him. But that artist who pretends to uphold the laws of beauty while clinging to a doctrine which negates all laws, is deeply hostile to the ultimate order of reality. For in the world of the real, everything is intertwined. Who flouts harmony

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and truth in the domain of thought must likewise flout them in the domain of style.

One may therefore conclude that criticism and reason, experience and philosophy, do not at all oppose each other but coöperate in mutual defense. And may I add that theology, too, is not inimical to but complementary of their teaching? It stands for intellectual truth and human well-being, but also for that beauty, the proper concern of art, which has its perfection in God. The Catholic outlook is, therefore, not hostile to art, as some would have you believe. If a writer says to us, "What I talk about is of little importance; what matters is that I should talk well," we agree with him because of what is implied by that final word, little but immense. If he writes "well"—that is, completely, integrally, with the substance nature proffers him, which his reason recognizes and his art perfects, he will reproduce the very unity of existence itself and will necessarily implant in his creative activity an image of it all—an image no doubt reduced in size and analogical, as is every product of human knowledge, but nevertheless an image in which God shall recognize His creation. "A beautiful thing seen here below," says Michelangelo, "resembles more than aught else that mysterious Source from Which all of us come." A work of art fails to attain that status only by reason of deficiency, privation, disgrace or contamination of thought. That which talks well is that which says all, according to the rules and laws proper to it; for the artist is free, but only by reason of his authority over his material, his skill in using the instruments of his craft, and his deep understanding and intuition of the precepts of art. His freedom implies no right to ignore reality. He will be honest if he does well that which he has to do—which, in the writer's case, amounts to playing square with words.

When Racine sets forth the frenzy of Phèdre, his one aim is to describe it adequately. But it never occurs to him that "adequate description" could in any way mean giving the impression that the sombre madness of his heroine is a sign of Divine election. On the contrary, he sets out to show "the frightful consequences of her horrible folly," and goes so far as to see in it a punishment of her crime by the gods. "The weaknesses of amorous passion," he says, "are real weaknesses in this play; the passions are here portrayed only in order to show the disorder of which they are the cause, and vice is painted in such colors as will render its deformity known and despised." A Racine calls things by their names.

Moreover, he was not surprised that theologians, or even ordinary thoughtful folk, were led to discuss grace as a result of having seen his tragedy. For grace was the substratum of his subject, the core of its pathos. Racine even wrote a preface in order to say that homage to the moral law which he felt, as an artist, should not be refused to it. At any rate he did not set "art" and "morality" in opposition, or contrast the rights of the poet with the exigencies of a Christian social order. And—to pass on now to a general conclusion—it seems obvious that Catholic theology has been the normal spiritual climate of hale mankind; and that, its doctrine being nothing less than reality itself, every portrait of and every reflection upon man has presupposed it in one way or another. Why, then, must anyone be surprised to find a critic basing his judgments upon that doctrine? Is it because that doctrine, claiming to be truth itself, is indeed something more than a subjective poem which everyone may interpret as he sees fit? Surely the interests of truth are at stake here, and those of morality are merely dependent upon them. There can be no question of condemning art, but it is imperative that it be kept subservient to that true reality which has authority over art in so far as it envisages the higher task of defending and understanding effectively the sovereign goods of all mankind.

Old Age of Thomas the Rhymer

He sits there now so quiet in the sun;
  His gnarled hands lie
Along the chair arms, and his sunken head
  Nods ceaselessly.

His faded eyes have found a little world
  Bounded by weed and wall;
Pebbles are there, and sometimes a brown hen,
  And that is all.

Somewhere are harps and those who play thereon;
  Fingers are skilful; they know how to bring
The smile, the tear. But quavering hands are dumb,
  They draw no melody to any string.

And Huntlie Banks are green and gay,
  And sweet the waters are.
Old bones, old bones are painful things,
  They cannot walk so far.

As eildon trees are dark at night,
  So are they green at noon;
And green, green as the eildon leaves
  Are the lady's cloak and shoon.

And milk-white is that lady's steed;
  Shake, shake, O tinkling mane!
The silver bells of that strange countree
  Ring in his ears again.

"Have now your choice, true Thomas," she says,
  "I pray you tell to me,
Will you taste the fruit upon yonder bough,
  Or the fruit of my lips?" says she.

"If you choose the apple above your head
  It will make you merry and wise.
But if you choose the kiss . . ." she said—
  Oh the luring light of her eyes!

"But if you choose the kiss . . ." The wind
  Stirs in the old man's beard.
Even the brown hen did not catch
  His scarcely muttered word.

MAIRE NIC PILIP.

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THE HIGH LIGHTS OF HUMANISM

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

THE sundry irreverent used, not long ago, to describe the American professor as a busy collector of foot-notes to nothing in particular. All plagues from drought to locusts (which are parasites) were just so many trifles to which he might be likened. One may admit that, under the stress of educational theory and practice, the professor did cover pretty nearly all the territory between thesis quiblets and class-room vaudeville. Not very many seasons past teachers of composition in a southern university were required to concentrate upon Anglo-Saxon texts—ostensibly with a view to keeping the foreign element out of the student style! And only omiscience could tell the extent to which the triumphant steam-rolling advance of novelties through the American mind is attributable to the absolute need of something that would keep the junior from Kokomo awake and sure that his "thinking" was being challenged.

But fundamental college leadership in America has nevertheless been going steadily toward something more valuable than scholarly bibliographies or current insight. This effort to attain to a philosophy, a theory of life, not merely academic or fatuously glib, is very apparent in the movement which chooses to be called humanism. However little of what Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More and their associates have written may actually figure in the popular intellectual menu, it has influenced many university men, is now more widely talked of than ever, and constitutes a challenge to which not a few are listening. Significantly enough, the first lucid summary of the movement appears in French, to the literature and civilization expressed in which humanism is closely allied. Le Mouvement Humaniste aux Etats-Unis, by Dr. Louis Mercier (Paris: Librairie Hachette) is so good and comprehensive a study that one might almost term it more useful and convincing than the books it discusses. It seems right on all essential matters, and may be recommended most highly to everyone who can read its lucid if compact prose.

The word "humanism" was originally adopted by Professor Babbitt to define a general theory of right education. It means, first of all, the formation of self in accordance with the "best that has been known and thought in the world." Here two demands are imposed—a right attitude of mind and heart toward either those sides of life which tend to set in motion overpowering currents of sentiment or "communion with nature," or those other sides which encourage the intellectual aristocrat to curse the age and retreat to his ivory tower; and, secondly, a "disciplined selection" of such values as are genuinely part of the perennial human tradition. Naturally enough, acceptance of these demands means discipline, which is not to be disregarded as unimportant since through it the individual averts decay and defeat from society.

This last consideration—the social significance of an intellectual aristocracy—gradually became the matter of greatest importance to Irving Babbitt. The work to be done by the humanist is not so much the increase of learning as the inculcation of obedience to the law of human life. Whenever a civilization gives way to its instincts, or whenever the crowd is divorced from its best men, punishment—nemesis—follows. Society must therefore be induced to accept the "frein vital," the curb it places upon its enthusiasms and desires, regardless of how much pleasure is sacrificed. Almost as a matter of course the model proposed by humanism is that Greco-Roman civilization best exemplified by France. It is obvious, however, that the doctrine of "frein vital" incorporates, though with a new emphasis, the New England conscience. And not the least interesting part of Babbitt's writing deals, it seems to me, with the problem of restating colonial theocracy in terms of modern intelligence.

In a series of books which one may define as demonstrations of the necessity for a disciplined and respected aristocracy, Babbitt is primarily the critic of contemporary chaos. This is attributed to errors inherent in the direction taken by civilization at a time —the renaissance—when discovery of the magnitude of the universe seemed to dwarf the stature of man. Were not the laws governing this immeasurable network of energies superior to any constitution the human being might propose for himself? After having accepted an affirmative reply, mankind arrived at two consequent points of view—the utilitarian humanitarianism of Bacon, and the sentimental humanitarianism of Rousseau. In other words, civilization decided to seek either dominance of nature or surrender to nature. Both were mistaken choices, for the reason that, as Emerson says, one law is the law of things, another the law of men.

But what is the law for men? This query has been most effectively answered, from the humanistic point of view, by Paul Elmer More. Although best known as a critic, More has been a constructive thinker interested, since the very beginning of his career, in maintaining the distinction between good and evil. In his case the Puritan conscience is a direct personal heritage, and the meaning of his work may be summed up as an effort to maintain that conscience while abandoning the gloomy religious philosophy with which Calvinism had associated it. He began with a study of Hindu thought, emphasizing as his chief discovery that the mandate of conscience resides in man, is even the essence of his being. Then there followed an earnest investigation of Platonism, reflected in what are

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probably the best of the More books. Here are restated those protests against a civilization based upon surrender to impulse or upon mastery of purely material forces, those appeals to the discipline of the individual as the only method of achieving social harmony, which resemble so closely the moral teaching of Babbitt.

Both have been willing to concede the value of religion as a help to achieving the only kind of progress which matters; but while Babbitt developed his teaching wholly apart from the concerns of faith, More went on to trace the relations between Platonism and Christianity and to write (in Christ the Word) a very impressive defense of the Christian assumptions. It is not my object here to compare humanism with Christianity. And yet it is obvious that its repudiation of diverse libidos, its attitude toward conscience and its appeals to the tradition of human civilization are essential traits of Catholic doctrine. As a matter of fact, both Babbitt and More have respected the work of the Christian Church, even if they do not admit the legitimacy of its claims or dream of joining the forces of humanism with the communion of saints. On the other hand, it seems to me that a Christian point of view would differ radically from the humanistic outlook in several important respects. What these are may be gathered from the following observations on the system, which are, however, put forward as purely "humanistic" opinions.

Is it not quite as impossible to conceive of a society that would place the primary emphasis upon discipline as it is to think of the cosmos as being, essentially, a complex of laws? In both cases the matter of greatest importance is surely the operative power. From time immemorial the most astonishing aspect of the cosmos has been (as P. Expeditus Schmidt so clearly shows) not design but being. The creative causes even now spill over the brim of restrictions as merrily as they did in the days of dinosaurs and innumerable volcanos. Though all the heavens show forth the power of their Maker, we somehow become more conscious of this when a comet happens along. And if one goes from the purely material to the purely spiritual realm, one finds Christ placing the emphasis not upon discipline—not upon the letter—but upon the life. The essence of all His attacks upon the Scribes is, indeed, summed up in the phrase, "I am the Life." Nor can we forget the multitude of the symbols He used to express this vitality—the mustard seed, the tree bringing forth fruit, the woman in travail.

In between these levels, where humanistic interests properly lie, it seems to me exceedingly precarious to adopt any other kind of standards. Modern philosophy, as we see it now, has involved a great effort to keep the world from drying up, intellectually speaking. On the one hand the mechanists were bent upon reducing everything to "laws"; on the other, the extreme intellectualists abandoned themselves hand and foot to "general ideas" from which all that men needed to know could be deduced. And so the achievement of Bergson, of Max Scheler and of the Neo-Thomism which is faithful to that "humility in the face of reality" which distinguished the Angelic Doctor, has been to restore that "freshness of the face of earth," that confidence in intuition, which is somehow part of the real meaning of life. But for the humanist (and I am thinking here of some passages in Professor Babbitt's writings) "intuition" is almost always "instinct," enjoyment of nature apart from the exercise of reason is dangerous, and mysticism is usually defined as a "surrender." A man who is always self-controlled, in the Babbitt sense, would never do anything foolish. But on the other hand he would not preach to the birds, nor burst into merry laughter, nor (after the fashion of Brother Juniper) plant the cabbages upside down.

These several matters are important, it seems to me, for the same reasons that art is important. And one may be permitted to doubt whether, despite so much that is excellent particularly in the Shelburne Essays (More's critical encyclopedia) and in the earlier work of Stuart P. Sherman, the combined forces of humanism have given any notable impetus to art. Is it not obvious that modern literature has been romantic not because the French Revolution happened along, but because a more or less romantic attitude toward life entered the western world with Christianity? Neither the Celt nor the Saxon has ever fully understood the harmony of Apollo; and though the sources of their Dionysaic energy have sometimes been adulterate or even vile, a little of that which Saint Bernard summed up in a memorable phrase—"Desiderio desideravimus in sacrarium tuae familiaritatis ingredi"—has persisted none the less. Art has been, ultimately, the voicing of our hunger for more than humanistic certainties. We have sought safety in our very uneasiness. Satiety, we have been bold enough to believe, might be achieved through ecstasy. And I for one believe that this current cannot be waved back with a gesture—even so imperial a gesture as that of the genuinely noble American thinkers under discussion here, or of their compeers in other lands.

And yet the corrective and healing values of the humanistic position are very evident to an era so conscious of chaos. The work of Babbitt and More ought to enter into the intellectual synthesis any American makes of culture or conviction. A Christian will find in it confirmation of much that seems to him abidingly sure, however aloof from him its authors may occasionally be. Certainly few points of view one might adopt in confronting the world as it is would be more salutary than this cardinal principle of the More doctrine: "One knows that the battle for the good and the beautiful, and for justice in the social order, must be fought in the heart of the individual, and that progress toward the ideal cannot be made excepting through mastery of self by every son of the human race."

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POWER AND PUBLIC REGULATION

By JOHN C. O'BRIEN

The following discussion of an important contemporary economic problem is written by a newspaperman who has come into direct contact with the issues involved. It is published here as one view of the public utilities situation. The editors are not in entire agreement with the author, but feel that the subject-matter is well worth discussion and reflection. Mr. O'Brien is concerned primarily with the decline of the public service commission as a regulating agency, and observes that the citizen finds himself face to face with a rapidly increasing consolidation of power.—The Editors.

REGULATION of the power industry by public service commissions was intended to provide the consumer reasonable rates and adequate service and at the same time assure the power companies a fair return on their investment. By exercise of the police power of the state, the commissions were expected to regulate rates and conditions of service in the monopolistic power industry in the way that the economic force of competition regulates rates and conditions of service in more competitive industries. After some twenty years of experience with regulation, the consumer has come to realize that the system has not worked out exactly as was intended—that, particularly in the adjustment of rates, it has not been entirely effective.

The power industry itself does not share this view. Indeed, the power companies are spending annually millions of dollars to make it appear that they have the real cause for complaint, that regulation is hampering their development, reducing their profits, and in some instances actually depriving them of their property without due process of law. But for contrary testimony the consumer has only to quote the words of the regulatory bodies themselves. The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities and the Giant Power Board of Pennsylvania, to take two of the more effective public service commissions, have admitted that regulation is in such an enfeebled state that the people are likely to conclude that it is a system "too cumbersome, inefficient and expensive to be tolerated, and will proceed to public ownership if a more effective instrument of control cannot be devised."

Many circumstances have contributed to the weakening of the public service commissions, but none more than the rapid evolution of the power industry toward monopoly. The industry is five times greater than it was in 1913, and control is passing into fewer and fewer hands. At first the companies contented themselves with removing competition in their immediate fields of service. Rival power plants in the same community were brought under one management. Later a single company came to embrace all its rivals in a single state or group of states. The most recent hook-up brought virtually all the power companies from the Canadian border to the southern boundary of Pennsylvania, on the Atlantic seaboard, into one group. In short, the development of this key industry has been marked by a succession of mergers, each more comprehensive than its predecessor. The pace is so rapid that the latest statistics are out of date almost before they are made public. In 1927 the Federal Trade Commission reported that 83 percent of the nation's annual production of 61,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours of electric current was controlled by twenty companies. Since then there have been other mergers and the end apparently has not been reached; something like a nation-wide tie-up is the goal for which the industry appears to be heading.

In the beginning the case for consolidation seemed so logical, the arguments for it so persuasive and the promise of lower rates so attractive that the consumer was wont to regard with a tolerant eye the stockjobbing maneuvers of the captains of the industry. It seemed reasonable to expect that the welding of a number of small plants, duplicating equipment and distribution costs, into one system would result in economies, a share of which would be passed along to the consumer in the form of lower rates. Even the public service commissions, sworn defenders of the consumers' rights, approved merger after merger on the theory that consolidation was "in the public interest." Not until centralization of control had proceeded to the point where it threatened to nullify regulation altogether did the public or the commissions begin to understand something of what actually had been going on.

But the awakening is now at hand. The public service commissions have discovered that, in sanctioning statewide and interstate hook-ups of power companies, they had contributed to the decline of their own power. The holding companies developed to hold the securities of operating companies acquired in mergers have proved to be most effective instruments in stripping the commissions of a large measure of their supervisory functions.

The holding companies have succeeded in remaining almost completely free from regulation. They have done this by means of so-called service contracts wherein they swell their own profits by charging their operating subsidiaries substantial percentages of gross earnings for management and supervision. These charges may be exhorbitant, and often involve double payment by the consumer for the same thing: first to the operating company, and later to the holding company. But the Supreme Court has held that service contracts are not to be questioned by the public ser-

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vice commissions, even where the holding company and the operating company are one in all but name. The service contracts—in reality, mere bookkeeping devices contrived to afford an excuse for higher rates—are beyond regulation by the commissions. In rate cases the commissions must hold that, regardless of the unreasonableness of the holding company's charges on its operating companies, the latter are entitled to revenue sufficient to meet the terms of their contracts and to provide a reasonable return upon their property. The excess costs thus taxed to the operating companies—a tax which, of course, the consumer ultimately pays—become profits for the holding companies, standing in the eyes of the federal courts in the technical position occupied by stockholders.

The commissions have not been backward in pointing out their incapacity to deal with these service contracts. In New York and Massachusetts they have asked their respective legislatures for additional grants of power but the petitions have gone unheeded. Thus, in one important field of regulation the public service commissions, as presently constituted, are shorn of even the form of regulation.

In the field left to them—a field rapidly being abridged as the operating companies continue to pass under control of the holding companies—the commissions are being reduced to virtual impotence by the practice of the companies in taking their rate cases to the federal courts. The commissions started out with the idea that they had the authority to determine what would be a fair return on the investment in the power industry. This fair return, in the early practice, was taken to be 7 or 8 percent on a revaluation representing the money actually invested, minus a reasonable sum for depreciation. The application of so straightforward a principle, however, soon brought the public service commissions into disrepute with the power companies. The companies had based their rates upon capitalizations representing much more than the actual investment; to assent to the revaluation formula of the public service commissions would amount to a confession that prevailing rates are too high. Accordingly, the companies seized upon the depreciated value of the dollar as justification for their seemingly swollen revaluation figures. They began talking about revaluations based upon "reproduction costs today," that is, not what their plants cost when built, but what it would cost to build them at the prevailing high prices of materials. They talked about the current low purchasing value of the dollar and argued that they were entitled to rates that would yield a return sufficient to give their stockholders dividends equal in purchasing power to those received twenty years ago.

Naturally the public service commissions, noting the effect such claims would have on rates, refused to admit them at full value; whereupon the companies had the commissions served with injunctions and took their rate cases directly to the federal courts under the Fourteenth Amendment to the constitution, which forbids a state to deprive anyone of property without due process of law. After wrestling for some years with the problem, the federal courts finally advanced to a principle of revaluation far different from that with which the public service commissions started out. In the case of McArdle versus Indianapolis Water Company, decided in 1926, the Supreme Court pointed to the conclusion that a public utility would suffer confiscation unless its rates yielded a reasonable return on the present value of its plant. This present value was defined as the estimated present market value of the lands employed in production, plus the estimated present value of buildings and machinery, plus a guessed-at valuation of the intangible asset the courts call "going value."

Under such a ruling it is obvious that the determination of revaluations for rate-making purposes becomes a matter of pitting the utilities' estimates of present values against the estimates of the public service commissions. As the figures of the two parties vary widely, the compromise decisions of the commissions are seldom satisfactory to the company. Resort is almost always had to the federal courts, a practice which threatens to remove regulation from the commissions more or less permanently to a jurisdiction more favorably disposed.

Even in the original hearings that precede the appeal to the federal courts, the public service commissions are wofully handicapped . In the first place, regulation at best is a highly technical matter which only a trained mind can master. Naturally, in the competition for experts the companies have had the best of it. Amply financed, they have been able to assemble staffs of legal and technical experts with which the commissions find it difficult to compete. Even where the state authorities have persuaded competent men to accept posts on the public service commissions, the commissions, in many instances, have not been able to keep them, since more lucrative berths on the utilities' staffs constantly tempt them away. It should not be inferred that the commissions, as a rule, are corrupt. About the worst that can be said of them is that their members are human and often tire of laboring on the public's side of the case when the other side offers greater rewards.

Moreover, the companies have had the good fortune of being the first in the field. This priority has given them a distinct advantage in establishing favorable revaluations in rate cases. Before the commissions came into existence, the companies were not required to classify their capital accounts so that the legitimacy of so-called capital expenditures could be determined. Thus, the companies have been able to present statements of huge original capital expenditures which the commissions have no way of verifying. These capitalizations often include pure water resulting from early changes of ownership and reor-

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ganizations. In New York state alone the power companies carry on their books $163,000,000 as "fixed capital," supposedly invested before the Public Service Commission came into existence. This vast sum stands as part of the revaluation upon which the consumer is expected to pay rates sufficient to yield a fair return.

Many other defects in the existing regulatory system might be mentioned but the foregoing is sufficient to show the extent to which regulation has broken down. As to how far regulation may be restored, there is no agreement among students of the question. One fact, however, stands out as incontestable: the American people in their present temper would seem to prefer to continue the experiment of regulation rather than to resort to public ownership. There is no widespread clamor for public operation of power companies. Power rates, if higher than they should be, are not exactly oppressive. Moreover, a large body of consumers, having purchased stock in the power companies, identify their interests with private ownership and management. But a monopoly performing so essential a service as the power industry cannot be permitted to run wild. If the police power is not equal to the task of assuring the consumer reasonable rates, then it would seem advisable to substitute the contract power. Let the state, by contract, limit new investment in the power industry to a fair return on the money actually invested. This was proposed to the legislature of Pennsylvania by the Giant Power Survey of that state and to the legislature of New York by the Committee on Coal and Giant Power, but the suggestions have never been enacted into law. In addition, it would seem necessary to clear up the confusion surrounding revaluation of the investment already in the industry. Something like a compromise between the basis of revaluation adopted by most of the commissions and that contended for by the companies would seem fairer to the consumer than the one laid down by the Supreme Court in the Indianapolis Water case. And assuredly, if the public service commissions are not to be reduced to a state of utter uselessness, they should be given control over holding company service contracts.

THE STAGE DOOR

By CLAUDE BRAGDON

I HAVE often thought that I should like to write a play and call it The Stage Door, though perhaps a more appropriate title in this winter of our discontent would be All Ye Who Enter Here, Leave Hope Behind. The setting for such a play need be no bigger than the coal-bin of a Long Island house, and it would be arranged and furnished something like this:

First of all there would be a chair and desk for the doorman; above the desk would be a list of the dressing rooms and their occupants, and beside it a key rack and letter-box, some of the pigeonholes empty and others full. Somewhere in sight and sound of everyone would be a coin-box telephone, living in a state of indecent exposure for the repository of so many tender and tragic messages—assignations, duns, oaths and veiled obscenities. Indeed, this fateful casket has become the modern abode of the Three Sisters, now metamorphosed into thousands, each wielding a metal plug on the end of a cord in place of the traditional shears: "You'd better come home, your husband's drunk!"—clip! "They took her to the hospital this afternoon"—clip! "He says you're not the type"—clip! "Darling, are you going to meet me tonight?"—clip, clip!

On the wall would be a bulletin board containing the latest edict of the Actor's Equity; a notice of the next rehearsal, signed by the stage manager; a soiled business card or two, and perhaps a press clipping containing a favorable notice of the show and actors by a friendly critic, but never, by any chance, one adverse. There might be also a calendar, a poster, or even a picture or two, and a rack containing Christian Science literature, but the only other essential properties would be a clock, a water cooler and a cuspidor, though in this particular case, for the furtherance of the stage business, I should introduce a battery of four superannuated orchestra chairs placed against the upstage wall. In the right hand transverse wall would be an opening leading to the stage and dressing rooms, with a glimpse of an iron stairway; and in the left hand wall the stage door.

I should have my play begin toward eight o'clock on any winter night, with the doorman discovered. He would be a kind, wise old Irishman, a sort of cross between Saint Peter without whiskers and Charon without an oar, through much drenching in human passions immune at last from Mara's poisoned arrows, a serene and for the most part silent watcher of the fret of the tide through the stage door. Enter the crew! More affluent than most of the actors, some have driven in from Long Island or from Jersey in their own cars. The parts of the flymen, whose occupation is only a little less sedentary than that of the statue in front of the Cooper Union, would have to be taken by fat men, and of the carpenters and electricians by lean. They would arrive singly and in couples, their hats over their eyes or at a bad angle, dropping their cigarette stubs in the alley before they enter, as the fireman might be about. They would pass through, and after they had set the stage for the first act you may imagine them playing pinochle in the prop-

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erty room or reading the sporting page—for they idolize physical prowess, and if the word is passed around that Tunney or Dempsey is out front, they come as near as a stage hand can come to having stage fright.

The members of the company would trail in after the crew, but by them unregarded, for, believe it or not, stage hands have for actors a contempt not unlike that of the Labor members of the House of Commons for the House of Lords. But the actors and actresses would exchange pleasant greetings with the doorman and with one another, for as a class they are kindly and warm-hearted in spite of occasional smoldering jealousies and short-lived, secretly nourished hates. They would look for their letters, get their keys from the rack, and be off to their dressing rooms. Meantime the members of the orchestra, each with his instrument box, would have been arriving, also the wardrobe mistress and her assistant, and last of all the star or staress, who will have dashed up late in a taxi, or his or her or somebody else's automobile.

Then would supervene an interval of emptiness and silence, which I should of course have to fill up by introducing some modern equivalent of the scene between the butler and the maid with which the authors of yesteryear used to inform the audience about the characters and the plot. An offstage voice would be heard to shout "Fifteen minutes!" and there would be the distant tuning of instruments, followed by music, faintly audible. Through the opening one would see actors and actresses in costume and grease paint throng into the corridor and down the stair: then would come another offstage cry of "Curtain!" and the performance—the play within a play—would have begun.

Beyond this point I am vague about my opus, not because I lack characters and a plot but because there are so many of both I find it impossible to choose; for in every make-believe play—every play given in a theatre—there are at least as many real dramas as there are actors, each one the protagonist of his particular tragi-comedy. The same thing is true, of course, of every person in the audience, but with this difference, that in the case of the actor the dramatis personae of both plays—his own, of which he is the hero, and that other, in which he is perhaps only a walk-on—are to a certain extent the same, so that one does not interrupt the other, as happens when you and I go to the theatre to be diverted, but they both go simultaneously on.

The only character in my play that I'm at all sure of is the doorman. By reason of his being guardian of the door he'd have to appear in practically every scene, but never obtrusively—a sort of silent watcher, or guardian angel from some other sphere. Eddie Foy, shortly before he died, did a vaudeville sketch in which he took the part of an old stage doorman. My man would be something like that, but less garrulous, with the tolerance and understanding which comes from a long experience of living, and the compassion which comes from an educated heart. The reason I am so sure of this character is because I knew him. Once, at an over-long rehearsal, one of the young women in the company fainted. Much concerned, I carried her into the shabby backstage vestibule presided over by this man, and asked him to call a cab. The girl revived presently and was taken home by a friend. When they were gone he saw that I was still anxious about her. This led to a talk between us. "I've known so many of these girls," he told me in the course of it. "I'm old. They tell me all their little troubles; why there was once, sir, when I was remembering more than forty of them in my prayers. They'd write their names down on a piece of paper and say, 'Now pray for me, Jerry, the next time you go to Mass'—and I always did pray for them too. Mary pity women! They have a harder time, sir, than the men."

Though I don't know what my play would be all about, I know, in a way, exactly what it would be like. It would all take place in the stage-door vestibule, for that is the only substitute for the greenroom; small as it is, it is bigger and airier than the dressing rooms, and more convenient to the stage. Everybody flocks there in their odd moments, for gossip, for roughhousing and wisecracking, for juxtapositions and the smoking of surreptitious cigarettes. The vestibule and the stage are reciprocals of one another, for during ensembles the vestibule would be empty, and when the stage was more or less empty, the vestibule would be filled. But however difficult it might be to arrange it, the action would have to take place in that one spot, for I should want the stage door always in sight: it would come to have a symbolical value, The Gateway of Birth and Death—the birth and death of so many hopes and dreams.

Everything would happen at the end of my play just as I have so often seen it happen, and if you want to know how that is, I refer you to the end of the first act of Deburau, for what Guitry makes to happen in the Théâtre des Funambules in far-distant Paris in that far-off time is about what happens in every theatre on Broadway every night—the chatter about the house and the business, the interviews, the assignations, the last good-nights. It's just another example of the timelessness of the temporal, the eternal certainty of return.

The actors would be leaving singly, in groups, in pairs, as soon as they had finished their parts, changed and scrubbed off their grease paint, though sometimes, if they were in a hurry, they wouldn't wait for this last. For some there would be friends waiting, but one would wait for somebody who never came. Anyway, there would be meetings and greetings of every shade of loving, liking, or disliking. Oh I've seen, and I know how women act when Cupid is in earnest: they want to touch the beloved with their hands—straightening his necktie, pinning a flower on his coat,

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or brushing imaginary somethings off his vest. Always they shine on him the full moon of their face and not the crescent, looking into his eyes with both their eyes; and here's a strange thing, every woman's eyes have the same expression: the eternal woman, on her eternal quest for a love which is eternal, looks for a brief moment out of the windows of some particular woman's eyes.

After the dying down of the applause which signalizes the final curtain, the last-act people hurry to their dressing rooms. The friends of the star who had been in the audience would crowd the narrow corridor outside the star's dressing-room door. Also among them would perhaps be a pressman, a photographer, an autograph hound, the head of a girl's school, all with eyes aglitter—the glitter of the axe each had come to grind. Meantime, slam, slam, slam goes the stage door. Exit, exit, exeunt, exeunt omnes—a gradual minoration, like the running down of a clock until it stops. All have gone, even the doorman, some by subway, some by taxi, some even, smothered in furs, in glittering, be-chauffeured, high-powered, high-priced cars. All are resuming, with a different cast, the play of their personal lives, each in a different setting—a room with a view, a room without a view, a speakeasy, a night club, the Plaza, Pierre's, according to each one's fate or fancy, as the soul wills or has willed in some past life.

Have you ever lingered in a theatre after everyone had left it, with the doors locked and all the lights out save for the stab in the eye of one bare lamp which served only to make the darkness visible? It is a passing strange experience! You feel like the burned-out cinder of some star lost in the gulf of space; above you and about you stretches the primordial void, the abyss. You are rescued from terror by the clatter of the elevated, a welcome sound for the first time in your life. You feel your way into the stage-door vestibule, and are ushered out by the friendly night watchman into the never silent, never unpeopled street. The passing traffic streaks the darkness with fiery pencils. On the cyclorama of the sky the brightness of Broadway is reflected, snuffing out all the stars but one. Would it be Venus or Saturn, do you think?

TWO WORLDS MEET IN ROTHENBURG

By LOUIS GOLDING

THERE is a likeness in the death of cities as in the death of men. In the death which encompasses Ravenna of the Byzantine mosaics, over in Italy, and Chipping Campden of the Flemish traceries, over in England, that same vast indifferent equality is operating which converts the dust of kings or peasants indistinguishably into weeds or lilies, if the dust which has incorporated their dust be propitious to this or the other growth. If there had been death at the heart of Rothenburg on the Tauber, that tiny immortal city upon hills in the deep folds of Bavaria, I know that I should have responded to it but too quickly, with a numbing at the heart and a faint mournful ringing of bells about the ears. For the circumstances were propitious to the creation of such sympathy.

As we passed under one of her many gates thick snow muffled our feet, which else might have made a clangor like metal in the close concave of the arch. The porter who conducted me to my lodging was silent as the snow. It was too dark to see his face in the narrow streets which closed about us; and the infrequent lamps made them the more spectral. He made me feel that he was a shade leading a shade. Yet even in the silence and snow and loneliness, I felt Rothenburg not to be dead but withdrawn, preserving herself as music in an instrument or odor in a flower that shuts by night.

Opening my window, I saw the ramparts below me extending east and west; west and east rose the black bulk of towers guarding the ramparts against enemies more insidious than the army of Tully, which they had withstood, and unsuccessfully, of old—such enemies, I would instance, as rococo architecture, or wireless, or prohibition. For below rampart and towers dropped the hillside steeply to the unhushed Tauber; beyond, ghostlily ascended the snowy fields. I had come at last to Rothenburg, despite the treaty of Versailles, despite even the salami—which is a kind of meat—provided as fare for the traveler at the junction station of Steinach.

There, I think, in the salami of Steinach, is essentially the dragon which holds the road to Rothenburg, and a more mottled and formidable beast even than that "basiliskest of basilisks" which Carpaccio painted for his side-alley Sclavonians in Venice. When the great trains from the north and west of Europe make for Munich they are often late at Steinach, and the few travelers who descend there find the local train already contemptuously departed. In my judgment the local train preserves an admirable sense of proportion. A single gable of the most rickety roof of Rothenburg is worth more than all the protracted ostentation of the Louvre, her palest grass-blade than the whole deliberate boskage of Unter den Linden. And, as I said, he who finds himself at Steinach for half a day or a whole night with nothing but its salami for sustenance, and who none the less persists in his pilgrimage, is worthy of the revelation called Rothenburg on the Tauber which next morning saluted my awakened eyes.

The truth is that, sealed by the several seals of her

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gates, exalted upon the forehead of her hills, freshened by a lovely wind which even in midwinter seems to convey the smell of fountains and blowing gardens, illuminated by an atmosphere as pure as flame, the spirit of Rothenburg appears to be not merely intenser in degree than the spirit of all earth's other cities, but different in kind, as the life of the middle-ages in Bavaria was different in kind from the life of Mr. Henry Ford in Detroit. I am driven to painting to express the effect that she produced upon me. I remember suddenly coming upon a miniature Van Eyck altar-piece which had, by some dark agency of the satiric gods, hidden itself in a great wilderness of Guercino and the Caracci and Guido Reni and other monumental gentlemen from monumental Bologna. It was like a jewel shining intensely against a background of lead foil, or a sole sky-reflecting pool on a waste of heath. Such was the intensity of her air and light. But the eye had to contract respondingly, in order to become aware of what was passing within the brightness. Then it was that the bright colors of all things living in Rothenburg, the hay piled in corners, the pigs squealing into entries, the curled garniture of butchers' shops, the fat bonneted women stooping over baskets, the boys wheeling hoops, the scarves thrown about necks, the mouths blowing at finger-tips, the tips of noses and ears, the incredible tails of cats, the irrelevant apparitions of goats and geese and divers other fowl—all these brought into mind the glorious phantasmagoria of Peter Breughel. The middle-ages had taken bone and flesh, and the flesh was nipped kindly by the frost, and high overhead from the Rathaus Tower pealed the clear bells.

Perhaps nowhere else in Europe does the girdle of old walls stand so complete. As you pace its circuit from the Spitalthor to the Weissthurm, and further to the Klingenthor, on the right hand you look into the outer and modern world, into the fading fields. On the left you look into a joyous mystery of survival which is the more joyous and mysterious because there is no panting deliberateness about it. You will find none of those resurrectionary efforts to make the Rothenburger dance his old country dances which make the bones of so many poor English peasants groan with dismay; nor is he pertly and commercially conscious, as the Italian townsman is, of the rare beauty about him. I had once thought in my folly that the stained glass of the thirteenth century, such as you see in Ulm or Regensburg, is lovelier than any sunset, because those dead artificers had wrested out of very fire and sky their last secrets of scarlet and sapphire. But I had not seen the sunset framed by a grey stone arch in Rothenburg and divided marvelously into mullions by the black intervening tracery of a winter tree. Day followed day, not like separate melodies, but like the bars of one sweet solitary tune. I had not entered a place of romance. No: I felt that I had never entered into reality before. It was the factories of Sheffield or Pittsburgh and the great skyscrapers towering dispiritedly over the defiled river that were an insubstantial pageant faded, leaving not a wrack behind.

And then one night I passed with a Rothenburger friend into a district which, even in that minute city, I did not seem to recognize. Perhaps I knew it well. Perhaps the spirit working from within already was producing a subtle change. But the sound that startled me was the tune—here in monarchist Bavaria—of no song else than the Marseillaise, forcing its way through the shuttered windows of an inn. I expressed to my friend my sense of keen surprise. But no, he insisted—yet after a little hesitation, I felt—it was not the Marseillaise, but the song of the communist internationale. As for himself, he was a simple, unambitious Socialist; but the secretary was his friend. Would I care to go in and see and hear? What song the sirens sang to Ulysses, the old writer said, is not beyond all conjecture; but what beings they were that were Karl Marx communists against a background of Peter Breughel, was beyond divining. Had they three heads and one eye? Had they tusks or tails? Let us enter, I said.

We entered. The beams were cobwebbed with centuries. The lamps may have burned at some period of their history before a Gothic Madonna. And seated along both sides of two tables were twenty or thirty little boys and girls, their hair scrupulously plaited or cut close to the scalp, as their sex demanded. All that it is possible for the human to present of well-scrubbed shone in their soaped faces, all of innocuous in their eyes.

Our unheralded entry did not disconcert their bland fury. Song succeeded song in an ever bloodier procession. I cannot write down here what was to be done with the capitalistic "belly" (no other word translates the German). I cannot write down what sentiments simmered on those tiny angelic lips. Here and there a parent sprawled in the grim corners of the room, as shaggy as his child was spruce. Once and again his eyes flashed commendation from under the seamed cliff of his brows, as some particularly lurid sentiment quickened the song. The industry of generations had concentrated upon the cleanliness of the children. For the parents, enough were dirty scarves and patched trousers tucked into muddy boots. Then the sitting came to an end. The blond babes climbed from the benches, each solemnly shook hands with his comrade, then all cried of one accord to the ceiling, "Heil Moscau, Heil Moscau, Heil Moscau!" Blond babes and shaggy parents disappeared beyond parapet and gable, were swallowed into the tall tombs of houses. Loud over the meeting of the two worlds tolled the bells of Rothenburg.

Once more I made the circuit of the solitary ramparts; but I knew not whether to look to the right, into the snowy fields, or to the left, into the sleeping city. Nor did the moon, making them both frail as foam, help me as she sailed wanly through thin clouds.

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WHICH WAY WRITING?

By JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

IN LETTERS, in philosophy, in art and in the life of which they form the expression, we seem to be at a period of pause. The pause gives the impression of being vernal, not autumnal; one can sense the germination. The signs of hope, if uncoördinated, are manifold. The waste land of the poets is not quite the sour ground of a decade back; writers—of course not all of them, by any means—seem to be working their way out of the romantic dilemma; we hear less and less of the wail that everything worth doing has been done.

The shift in the temper, in the atmosphere, was not so noticeable a little while past. The impotence of Sherwood Anderson, who had insisted upon his own dilemma (that of going out of the house: to what?) through book after book, weighed upon younger writers to whom affirmations were necessary before creation could come. The talent of Floyd Dell, for instance, had dried up after Janet March. Revolt was not sufficient to nourish an entire career, and when the gestures were made, the cap flung, and the shout gone up, there was no place to go. The mind of Joyce had disintegrated, and he was producing work in which all the values are equalized, and everything floats about in a Sargasso Sea of the intellect. T. S. Eliot was the lord of the younger poets and served to restrain them from any expression of their own. Philosophy was outlawed; behaviorism could explain the human being, and nothing else could.

But now, of a sudden, one can feel the shift in direction. It is hard to pin down and isolate the reasons for the sense of change, but one can track them into this corner and into that. The late work of Waldo Frank, turgid as it is in vocabulary, is but one indication of the renewal of hope for life and its richest expression. The Rediscovery of America is horribly written, but none the less it is not to be spoofed out of existence. The latest discoveries and hypotheses of science, admitting imponderables, have released men here and there from the sense of being nothing more than mechanistic phenomena. The fact that if one refuses to accept the behaviorist explanation of human life, one's behavior is thereby appreciably altered, has just begun to sink in, and it is having its spiritually liberating effect. Science, in the opinion of the interpreters of Eddington, has withdrawn its objections to the doctrine of the freedom of the will. Irwin Edman adds his voice to that of Mr. Frank in the effort to rehabilitate philosophy; science, he says, now claims nothing beyond measurement for its province, and the mystic and his claims are reëstablished.

In the province of criticism an experimental magazine, Salient, operated in connection with the New School for Social Research, dares print the affirmation that life is earnest. A year ago, two years ago, that remark would have been howled down by the sophisticated apostles of the negative attitude. Gorham B. Munson's Destinations, posing a goal for American writers, crops up for mention here and there, noticeably in an article in the Bookman which defends Irving Babbitt and the uses of something more than impressionism in criticism. Allen Tate is busy with the attempt to find a program, a common convention, that poetry may accept, may use as a firm ground from which to poise a forward assault. The recrudescence of interest in humanism is evidence of a growing healthy attitude toward our world. We seem about to accept our surroundings; we seem ready to build. The time for taking Mencken's advice, to "heave dead cats into the sanctuary and go roistering on our way," is passing. The interest of T. S. Eliot in programs for creation is an especially healthy sign, coming as it does from an apostle of despair, from a man who, like Webster, has been much obsessed by death. Edmund Wilson's profession that Gertrude Stein's nonsense is tiresome in the bulk is a fair augury; it is significant of a shift in interest from the mechanics of expression toward an interest in its objective. A. S. Baylinson, secretary of the Society of Independent Artists, notices a trend from interpretive to representative painting. He admits a growing seriousness in the world of the painters; abstractionism is no more enough than a mere repetition of the work of old masters. Upheaval for its own sake is on the wane.

These observations are borne out somewhat by a glance at the magazine Creative Art. In a recent issue there are reproductions of paintings by an Englishwoman, Dod Procter. They are very revelatory, for they apply what has been learned from the principles of cubism to representative painting. The limbs of Dod Procter's subjects are in both anatomical and rhythmical relation, and hence satisfactory from both the logical and the aesthetic point of view. Dod Procter's path is going to be the route of more and more of our artists. And it is my belief that literary art is about to follow the same road. Ever since Joyce and Lawrence and the exponents of free verse came into the arena, we have had a continual run of experiment, of devising of new methods, new technique for attaining richness and subtlety. So far, the use to which these methods have been put has been the creation of fragments. But the turn of the tide is at hand; our writers, from now on, will turn more and more from the exhibitionism of trying to invent new ways of expression for the sake of the invention. It is time to take their discoveries, combine them, discard some of them, and produce enduring work. The moment has struck for a return to what Thornton Wilder calls the "notation of the heart," for style is, after all, "the faintly contemptible vessel," the means to the end. ("Contemptible" does not mean negligible.) It is time to change the stress from revolt to serious work. The trees are down; it is time to build solidly in the cleared spaces.

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POEMS

Spring Molting

But when a breeze is felt,
Against the brow, be sure
Its fingers will enroll
Encumberments, the poor
Entrappings of the soul.

For soon the spring will melt
The snake-skin from the snake,
The fur from off the fox,
And cluttered earth will make
Room suddenly for phlox.

The spirit wears a pelt
Of too luxurious fur.
The sad and sweated soul,
O ladies, pity her!
And talk in paradox,
Diminish to be whole.
For this, the snake, the fox,
And all our days unroll.

MARGERY MANSFIELD.

Sunset

A plow and horses clamber
To the sky's sharp edge,
Where the road's flat amber
Flexes on the ridge.

The plowman pauses sighing.
Column-tall, he stands
Against the birds' black flying
And the clouds' red bands.

He might have been a peasant
Of old Palestine;
Or hawked for his lord's pheasant
Once beside the Rhine;

Or watched the white world burning
From a hill of Rome,
Who is a plowman turning
Down the road to home.

CATHERINE MOORE.

Ode to the East Wind

Sad breeze, you make the jovial trout
  Spurn fly and bait and sink to bed;
You fill the trusting deer with doubt;
  You bow with grief the woodchuck's head;
    While crickets, dead to mad elation,
    Chirp with a mental reservation.

You glaze young foxes' glinting eyes,
  Fill skunks with homicidal madness,
Prostrate the minks with sad surmise—
  I too shall bite the dust of sadness!
    For who am I, to prance and shout
    When all creation's down and out?

ROBERT HAVEN SCHAUFFLER.

Engadine

In the high hills,
In the hollows of the high Swiss hills,
Far above the lake that sleeps
So still, so far below,
Lies an airier pool.
Its springs arise in fragrant space
Above the wild flowers,
And not a stream that flows therein
Flows through earth.
Across uneven pastures
By the shores of the high pool,
Lumbering cows munch bright colors,
Trample on fragrance.
From heavy throats of ever-hungry cows
Soft bells dangle.
Cows amble,
And sound runs and ripples from the bells,
Filling the pool.
Gay and sunny are the waters of sound.

In Alpine hills
A pool is fed by bells.

MELVILLE CANE.

Burgos Cathedral

After the seven portals, the triple towers,
The fifty altars—the devil that calls the hours—
The forest of saints, the sacristan explaining,
You find your little taste for grandeur waning:
You linger now to guess what may be hid
Within the trunk belonging to the Cid.

These giants, this giant love of God is far
Too great for travelers in a motor car.
Real pilgrims come on foot. The sun is low,
It will be cool now on the paseo
Beneath the trees where, calmly, the third King Charles
Surveys a fountain that might be in Arles.

GOUVERNEUR PAULDING.

Lover Abroad

He talks of her, the ironic silence of her moods,
Her swagger in a new delight, her fearless taunts
To life, and wistful challenges to placid fates.
He tells of her young solemness; he gravely flaunts
Her cryptic impudence, and of her proudness prates;
Remembering her coolly elfin lips, he broods.

Half-way across the world, he sees no azure skies
But what he reminisces of a certain dress
Of hers; the moon of Capri, the Andalusian hills
Are only memories of home with her; unless
They echo with her name, he scorns Lombardian rills;
And London's fogs are beauty, color of her eyes.

DOROTHY BELLE FLANAGAN.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Paolo and Francesca

THERE are, apparently, two main ways in which the world at large has sought to justify, vicariously, its amorous wrong-doings. One is through the emotions, the other through devious rationalizing. The first way admits the wrong-doing, but seeks to excuse it. The second way simply refuses to admit the fact of wrong-doing and seeks a dozen or more reasons for calling it right. The emotional way is essentially the way of the theatre or the poem, whereas the rationalizing method is essentially that of the essay.

The emotional method is certainly very beguiling, in spite of the fact that it always follows a very simple formula—that of expert sympathy-building. A lovely and romantic heroine marries an elderly man. It may be against her will, or simply through maidenly ignorance of the world. And the man she marries may be a sensual brute or simply selfish in his desires. The exact circumstances matter little so long as the audience (or the reader, in case of a poem) is prepared to say "Poor thing!" Thereupon appears the romantic young hero, destined, it would seem, from all eternity to make the heroine happy. There is nothing against him except that he arrived on the scene too late. To increase the poignancy of the situation, he may either be related to the aging husband, or be under some honorable obligation to him so that a double barrier is placed between the hero and the unhappy heroine. It only remains now to put terrific temptation in the path of the two young people. The older poets used to avoid the acute issue by having someone administer a love potion to one or both of the youngsters—thus adapting the device of the ancient Greeks who always shouldered responsibility for wrong-doing on some convenient god or goddess. The more modern writers, in search for plausibility, find a substitute for the love potion in enforced proximity or in some such vacuous phrase as the "call of youth to youth," embroidered by moonlight and secret gardens. The only essential thing is to give the impression that "it couldn't be helped," that it was beyond the powers of human resistance. Then let vengeance take its course, and the lovers are promptly immortalized in tears of compassion.

Stephen Phillips's Paolo and Francesca uses enforced proximity and the "youth call." It is an old play, last prominently revived in 1906 as a vehicle for Irving. In the present revival it is a vehicle for Miss Jane Cowl—and one might as well admit promptly that no actress could fit into the emotional scheme more perfectly. She is quite too lovely and gracious and romantic to make hard-hearted analysis of the play an easy task. But the fact remains that with all its external glamour, the play is nothing less than the story of a faithless young wife and a dishonorable younger brother, so garnished with languorous words, honeyed moonlight nights and dark vengeance as to wring the heart and obliterate all true perspective. Nor do I see any reason for glossing over the facts simply because the characters themselves have such antiquity as to belong to classic legend. The story is modern enough, as any casual glance at the tabloids will show, and if photography and sordid details and excessive publicity have removed the last vestige of romance today from a corset salesman's "love nest," it is not because the problem has changed a whit, but only because our vision of it is more complete. And, at that, we know too well what the sob sisters can do to convert a murderess into a national heroine overnight. No. At the full risk of being called the basest of philistines, with no soul for poetry or romance, I openly affirm that Paolo and Francesca and the tabloid account of some Bronx murder triangle differ only in the telling, not in the essence of the story.

I have, moreover, this further complaint to make of this production so earnestly undertaken in the name of art and beauty—that not even in the telling of the story does the play justify itself. The verse rings with occasional beauty of word and phrase, but more often it is inflated and dull. The action is interminably slow, and many irrelevant incidents are introduced so obviously for comic relief that they fall like lead. Katherine Emmet brightens the occasion by one excellent characterization. (At the Forrest Theatre.)

Man's Estate

THE Theatre Guild has not exactly enhanced its reputation by the selection of this play by Beatrice Blackmar and Bruce Gould. It tells, with rather complex side incident, the story of Jerry Jordan and Sesaly Blaine, a sort of adopted daughter in the Jordan family, who find love more convenient than marriage and, later, marriage more convenient than love, and for motives that are far from clear.

The first act is devoted chiefly to showing that Jerry wishes to break away from small-town home ties and become a great architect, and that his love for Sesaly is not quite great enough to make him marry her before his career is established. Sesaly sympathizes with his view theoretically, but wants, instinctively, to be first in his life. They have the example of a rather fair compromise worked out by Jerry's older sister and her husband, Dr. Bender, who are visiting the old homestead at the time. But that is not enough to set them straight. The second act, in which Sesaly finds she is to become a mother, is devoted to lengthy and detailed discussions of love before marriage, fatherless children, the opinion of neighbors and Dr. Bender's favorable views on abortion, which he refuses to consider as murder. Primarily, the points to note are that Dr. Bender is made a sympathetic character in the play, and that the fact of his marriage to Jerry's sister having been preceded by four years of intimate relations goes quite unchallenged, almost as if to prove that it was by far the best arrangement for them both. The third act then proceeds to leave one in complete doubt as to the authors' viewpoint by having Jerry marry Sesaly and then quickly abandon all thought of a career, accepting instead a clerkship in his uncle's hardware business and remaining quietly in the home town.

I do not particularly enjoy plays that set out to prove this or that theory of life, but some unity in a writer's philosophy is essential to dramatic integrity, and certainly there is no unity here, unless it is to be found in the rather foolish theory that whatever you do is for the best provided you want hard enough to do it. Otherwise the quick shifts in attitude and sympathy are merely evidences that the authors themselves have not made up their minds on any important facts of life. The general implications are that they merely wrote a shocker and then beat a hasty retreat by adding a sugary ending. Certainly there is nothing mature about the play except its title, and much that, by inference, is merely a plea for criminal practice. (At the Biltmore Theatre.)

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COMMUNICATIONS

CHEAP TRUTH NEEDED

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Your issue of February 27 contains a letter from M. J. B. calling attention to the great good that could be done by the manufacturing and distribution of inexpensive booklets to contradict the enormous mass of "lying literature" which has been distributed attacking the Catholic Church and her history. A splendid idea indeed, the one now in active operation by several groups including the International Catholic Truth Society, America Press, the Paulist Press and others. These companies issue booklets at a few cents each.

The inference in M. J. B.'s letter that Barclay Street is somewhere at fault for the high prices of Catholic books is unjust criticism. An inexpensive edition of Macaulay's England can be bought on Barclay Street just as well as it can be bought elsewhere. Francis Thompson's Saint Ignatius (not Saint Francis) will cost elsewhere the same as on Barclay Street. Barclay Street has absolutely nothing to do with the making of the price for Macaulay's England or Thompson's Saint Ignatius. Neither is published by a Barclay Street house and it is not the bookseller but the publisher who establishes the price. It is unfair to blame Barclay Street for this situation, and it is even more unfortunate that so many others are prone to do the same thing.

There are many, very many, inexpensive books in the Catholic book stores on Barclay Street and one does not have the least trouble in finding them.

ARTHUR KENEDY,
Vice-President, P. J. Kenedy and Sons.

THE INTIMATE LIFE OF THE LAST TZARINA

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—As a rule I welcome all the criticisms which my books, like those of most people, are subjected to, but there are a few points upon which I would like to enlighten Mr. Boyd-Carpenter apropos of his remarks on my story of the unfortunate Tzarina Alexandra of Russia.

My appreciation of her character was based on my personal knowledge of her, and on her own letters, the authenticity of which has never been disputed. In those letters she continually advises her husband to resort to measures like exiling in Siberia, or hanging, the people who have displeased her, or criticized the incapable and rotten government that finally brought Russia to its ruin. I do not think anyone could call such advice wise, or the person who gave it intelligent, or anything else but foolish. No indictment of a more formidable character has ever been drawn against anybody than those letters constitute against the personality of the woman who wrote them.

I have written my book from the Russian point of view, and in Russia there certainly existed among the aristocratic circles a feeling of great contempt for the small German dynasties, such as that of Hesse, to which the late empress belonged. Moreover, the ancient families directly descended from Rurik, and very proud of their origin, looked down even upon the Romanovs, of whom they considered themselves the equals, when not the superiors. The fact that the empress was the granddaughter of Queen Victoria had nothing to do with the matter, nor did the Queen or the other members of the House of Windsor enter into the question of the impression produced by Alexandra on those members of the Russian aristocracy whom she insulted or treated with contempt, notwithstanding the fact that Peter the Great and Catherine II had consulted their ancestors, and that they believed themselves entitled to offer their advice as well as their services to their sovereigns.

No one would think of considering the note on the Opritchnikis as a historical document, nor was it included in the appendix to the book otherwise than as an explanation of what they were, a fact which few people in our country know, outside of students of Russian history. There was no need to support this explanation with any reference. In regard to the warning given by the president of the Duma to the Tzar, it was not considered necessary to quote the numbers of the pages of his memoirs, wherein he relates his efforts to enlighten the emperor as to the dangers of the political situation in Russia, in view of the fact that these memoirs are so well known that nobody would presume to quote them wrongly. However, as Mr. Boyd-Carpenter does not appear to have read them, I will tell him that he can find the passages to which he seems to object on pages 46, 253, 254 and 261 of the book.

Finally, the text of the address of the Zemstvo of Tver has undoubtedly been published long ago, not only in the European press but in every book dealing with the Russian revolution in both Europe and America. It is impossible to omit it when attempting to describe the course of the movement which culminated in the overthrow of the Romanov dynasty, because it constituted the first spark that set afire the mighty edifice which, people believed at the time it was presented to Nicholas II, nothing in the world could destroy. It occupies in Russian history the same place as the declaration of the "Droits de l'Homme" in French history, or as the Declaration of Independence in our country. As such we will find it quoted by historians many years after my book and its critics alike have been forgotten.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

CENSORS UNDER FIRE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I have received a marked copy of your issue of March 20, calling attention to the article on page 557 entitled Censors under Fire. As your publication is primarily a review of literature and the arts, it is perhaps natural that you should assume the attitude on this subject of the more vociferous exponents of literature and the arts, without giving due consideration to the facts in the case.

In the first place this society is not a censor, and so an attack upon it cannot be properly treated as Censors under Fire.

My name is John Saxton Sumner, so that the middle initial is S and not T.

Bills to investigate this society or repeal the law under which it was incorporated are nothing new. Every member of the legislature is constantly called upon to introduce bills, and does so more or less as a matter of course. Sometimes they favor the bill and sometimes they have no interest in it. If your quotation is from remarks made by Senator Feld, I assume that he thinks the bill is commendable, but evidently he has been misled or else is descending to the methods of the

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demagogue. There is no legislation "giving autocratic power to one man to do things upon his own initiative."

This society is a law-enforcing organization. It has no more power than any citizen. It does, however, have the time to give to criminal prosecutions which the ordinary citizen does not have. That is what it was created for. It is a proxy for the ordinary citizen, from whom it receives complaints, and acts or refrains from acting thereon depending upon the merits of the complaint. Nor can it effectively act thereon unless authorized by a city magistrate, a district attorney or some other duly constituted public official.

The society is not a one-man organization. It has a functioning executive committee, a board of managers and other committees. Like any active corporate body, it has an executive who appears for and represents it in its work. That is my job.

While it is a small affair from the financial standpoint, existing on a budget of about $16,000 per annum, its influence is considerable because it represents the sentiment along certain lines of the great bulk of the people. Opposition comes from violators of the law, their friends and supporters and from those who are misled by published misrepresentations or misunderstandings.

We do not agree with you "that society at large will fear to make itself ridiculous by condescending to do combat with the absurd"—meaning this society. Society at large does not combat this society because it knows that we are engaged in a necessary work in the interests of society at large. When The Commonweal gives aid and comfort to the opposition, it is allying itself with the enemies of an agency of the common weal.

We would suggest that before coming to a conclusion in regard to the society's usefulness, you confer with the public officials with whom we coöperate including the United States postal and customs officials, local police, magistrates, judges of the Court of Special Sessions, the District Attorney and others. We know the source of attacks upon the society and its work, but we also know the record of the society during the past fifty-six years. Come and see us and learn of the 90 percent of our work which gains no widespread publicity, and we are sure that you will have a different opinion.

JOHN S. SUMNER,
Secretary, the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice.

WHAT WERE THE MIDDLE-AGES?

San Antonio, Tex.

TO the Editor:—The writer, upon concluding the reading of the second part of Father Lacombe's article, What Were the Middle-Ages?, felt that he could not permit this opportunity to pass without contrasting this accurate and convincing monograph with the puny efforts of a certain well-known author who, a few years ago, felt constrained to give to the world a story of philosophy wherein he succeeded (in his own estimation) in disposing of the life and works of Thomas Aquinas within the space of one octavo-size page—to be exact, within the space of four lines.

Unfortunately, Father Lacombe's lament that we Catholics of America are failing to take that degree of interest in the study of mediaeval thought that is shown in Italy, France, Germany and Canada, is only too true. Perhaps if more of us had on our library table, and would read with a sympathetic interest, a work such as Henry Adams's monumental Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres, which for sheer spiritual beauty alone has held the attention of critics both at home and abroad, and for the publication of which we are indebted to the American Institute of Architects; or if we would give a modicum of our spare time to the perusal of the recently translated Thomas Aquinas, His Personality and Thought, by Dr. Martin Grabmann; or if we would at least display an inquisitive interest in the work that is being done by the Mediaeval Academy of America—the writer feels certain that Father Lacombe would then find no room for complaint.

EDWARD H. LANGE.

JOHN DANIEL LOGAN

Halifax, Nova Scotia.

TO the Editor:—We were all pleased with The Commonweal's recent comment on Doctor Logan, who gave summer school courses here a year ago, and is very well known in Halifax. The cathedral was almost filled with men for his requiem Mass, Catholic and non-Catholic, rich and poor; besides there were a number of small boys with whom he had chummed, and even several toddlers with whom he had made friends. May his soul be actively happy forever.

John Daniel Logan

A spirit has passed from the day,
Passed on a breath, and away:

A spirit that gave his best
To life with its outstretched hands
And youth in its eagerness,
Then turned to his rest;

A spirit that vanquished fears,
And wrested from bitterness
And anguish unutterable
A crown for the years;

A spirit that burned with rare,
Generous love for friends,
And shrined the memory of one
Deathlessly fair;

A patriot he, and a soul
Questing a country afar
Beyond the uttermost star,
Where was his goal.

Over now is the quest,
With day, in the sun-bright west.

SISTER MAURA,
Mount Saint Vincent College.

FOR UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE

Cleveland, Ohio.

TO the Editor:—The title of your periodical implies an interest in the common good. You have manifested some interest, not in prohibition, but in the restoration of the liquor traffic. How much will you contribute to the "common weal" along the lines suggested by President Hoover by urging a more universal obedience of the American people to the laws of the land?

Or do you maintain that the people of any state may obey such laws as they've a mind to and curse all those they are not inclined to?

Yours for "the greatest good to the greatest number."

W. S. LLOYD.

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AMONG THE SPRING BOOKS

Melville's New Halo

Herman Melville, by Lewis Mumford. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company. $3.50.

THE author of Moby Dick used to rail at his status as a juvenile writer. Now he has become the favorite highbrow immortal, the books about him are diverse and rapt, the kotowing to his distinction is unrestrained, and Mr. Mumford enters with the supreme tribute—400 pages of unflagging gusto. Both critic and subject, are, in this case, interesting; but is the spectacle of wedlock between the two equally agreeable? The reader may decide. Such marginal observations as follow are merely personal.

Lewis Mumford is a preacher, haranguer, reformer. No other so essentially Ruskinian a mind dwells among us, to insist upon righteousness of spirit and "the priesthood of art." The stones in his case are not those of Venice, but that pantomime in rock and concrete which America is occasionally allowed to produce. There is no Mumford Turner, excepting in the collective sense of hoary prophets and young expressers. And not the least among the charms of the present book are the neatly inserted homilies which inveigh mightily against the crassness of this world. One on page 16, which begins with the Erie Canal and ends with an allusion to the "sources of their incomes," is really very fine. Another about Attica and New England is, perhaps, even more deft. But every preacher is inevitably a seeker after texts. And in the instance at hand Melville is a text—which is hardly what he might be to a regulation critic.

With a certain ancient method of hagiography almost every Christian is mournfully familiar. To it the things needful have always been (1) to affix the hero on an unimpeachable pedestal by placing him in the company of the most illustrious elect, and (2) to show forth his virtue by doing the rest of the landscape in midnight. Add a diction of sustained, impassioned solemnity, and you have the formula which infuses awe into the most frivolous. We have latterly come to surmise, in the realm of religion, that the recipe omits (if I may be pardoned a distraction) the element that corresponds to baking powder. But Mr. Mumford has surmised no such possibility.

He not only places Melville's "central book" side by side with the Divine Comedy and Hamlet, but essays (specifically in one place and more implicitly elsewhere) a comparison with Buddha and even Christ. Those of us who had hoped American readers might eventually rank Moby Dick with The Scarlet Letter and the half-dozen other superior books of the Romantic age may be pardoned for rubbing our eyes a little at the progress thus suddenly made. But it is clear from Mr. Mumford's analysis that he is pleading not so much for Melville's style, story or character as for the doctrine which may be deduced from his work. This admittedly is not sufficiently objective, is far too heavily veiled in allegory, to be formulated more definitely than each reader will formulate it in his turn. We are therefore inevitably forced to conclude that the dimensions of Melville are, for Mr. Mumford, the dimensions of the doctrine he has been able to distil. And here are some of its elements: the "tragic sense of life," which is man's giving significance to death by "choosing his ends, dreaming of immortality, erecting monuments and statues and museums, and, above all, by transmitting the written word"; the discovery that "life is eternal, and he who has faith in it and participates in it is saved from the emptiness of the universe and the pointlessness of his own presence therein"; the creation of a "new synthesis," that great contemporary American problem, so necessary because "the physical remains of another culture in Europe give the mind a false sense of stability and security."

I may be pardoned for observing that this doctrine, which is certainly worthy of respect, seems to be neither entirely derivable from Melville nor any greater than a score of other doctrines fairly current. That in the author of Moby Dick, one among the many adventures of the New England mystics was followed through to the end with splendid courage and genius seems true, indeed; but Mr. Mumford has not compared it with those other adventures, for reasons to which we shall return in a moment. And the "greatness" of the doctrine may be judged from the clearest expression given to it: "If there is no God, exclaims Dostoievsky's hero, then we may commit murder; and in the sense that God represents the totality of human purpose and meaning the conclusion is inevitable." Now one who really holds that Dostoievsky's remark is right knows that it would not be right if the interpretation given to it by Mr. Mumford were accepted. If God be nothing more than the totality of human things, murder becomes a meaningless moment in a stupid process that has wasted one hour of the universe's time. On the other hand a museum is of the highest importance under this system of philosophy—for a man may there pay homage to idols in his own likeness, without too noticeably bothering with the detail that all have been restored and that not even Sir Joseph can tell the false gods from the true.

It seems to me that a just critical appreciation of Melville would have to see him through his age. And this variety of perspective is denied to Mr. Mumford, despite his wide reading. He is a retrospective Spengler. He can write down the age: "Melville drew back the cosy hangings of Victorian parlors and disclosed the black night outside, dimly lighted with the lights of ancient stars" (which is really a bit rhetorical). He is willing to accept a dowdy cliché about it: "All young ladies, in Melville's day, arrayed themselves in a mysterious sorrow, as an aphrodisiac, so that the tender hand of solace might achieve in compassion what it dared not snatch by brasher methods" (and one can see a good many hale old ladies winking from beyond the grave). He summarizes literary movements: "Except in the roughest political lampooning, satire did not penetrate the leathery optimism and the cast-iron self-righteousness of ante-bellum America" (which is unfair and historically inaccurate). If these quotations suffice to indicate the darkened rooms through which poor Melville moves, in this book, they will have served their purpose. I really hope somebody will say a kind word eventually for one of the man's parents. At the present their chief offense seems to have been that instead of issuing a volume of grave reflections, they produced Herman.

All new doctrines tend to wear garments austere and solemn. But Mr. Mumford, who can write very well, sounds here like a somewhat overwrought prophet. The book never comes alive, going about in its Paterian pose like stage-struck music. "The sea is dangerous; the horizon has no bounds; and the fathom-line can never reach the bottom, once land is far astern" —Good Lord, this is bad blank verse, not prose from a brilliant American critic! And the style is like the whole per-

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formance, which has nobility of intention and an intelligent point of view, but waddles through its eulogies with all the clumsiness of the old Whitmaniacs. It is a pity that the anti-Puritans should deprive themselves so completely of all scintillant laughter. More important, however, is the thought that if the "new criticism," having unparalleled scholarly resources at its disposal, is to write the nation's spiritual history in such glaring blacks and whites as this, we may come to have not a perspective of reality but a gallery of misleading caricatures.

PAUL CROWLEY.

Peace in Fetters

Disarmament, by Salvador de Madariaga. New York: Coward McCann, Incorporated. $5.00.

THIS volume is divided into three sections dealing with the general obstacles to disarmament, the historical aspects of the problem, and finally the problem prospectively. It is not necessary to deal with each of these three sections in detail, nor would it be of advantage even from an international point of view.

The author claims that he has attempted to survey the question of armaments as a world citizen, though he realizes at the outset that a world-conspectus attitude runs counter to two strong and possibly bigoted currents of opinion: the first is the resentment aroused by the slightest censure which emanates from a foreign source; and the second, what he terms "that deplorable aberration of patriotism, which leads people to abdicate all right to criticism in matters of foreign policy." To dissipate this he proposes that any student or reader should clearly place before himself three main suggestions: first, that the author and the reader mean what they say; second, that they both agree that no man is serious minded who holds that a fact and its obvious opposite are compatible as a basis of discussion; and third, that both must judge by deeds.

The author was for six years an official in the secretariat of the League of Nations, in the department dealing with the problem of disarmament; has written much in western magazines on international affairs; and in addition, is a linguist of considerable experience and distinction. The thesis is introduced by the statement that armament must ultimately be a loss economically, and also is part of a system which fosters a spirit of distrust; because armaments cannot be justified except on the grounds of dire necessity, and such necessity rests finally on mistrust. Further, as the planet on which we live is explored for the sinews of war such as oil, rubber, gold and food products, by all nations, and especially the more powerful nations, mistrust is once more stimulated. The Commission of Experts at the League of Nations have already ascertained and announced that the "only self-supporting region of the world is the whole world." Armament-producing firms are themselves interested in fostering a state of affairs which will keep alive the elements of mistrust, and hence lead to the demand for armaments.

Similarly the author seizes upon such phrases as "Si vis pacem para bellum," and places them in juxtaposition with certain modern observations on life, such as that preparedness necessarily leads to a scramble for raw materials, and possibly control of territories, which are in themselves causes of friction among nations.

Passing from the material obstacles to disarmament which mutual fear produces, it is pointed out that such countries as France, England, America, Japan are units of much complexity, because their populations can be divided socially into horizontal layers of greater and less education, and then vertically into parties animated with differing spirits and conflicting ideas. Hence, naturally, in the solution of international affairs and problems, the League of Nations, with its organized committees and its avenues of information, will be found to possess that impartial calm indispensable in sorting evidence and giving opinions useful to the particular nation as well as to the world.

Though a generous tribute is paid to Dr. Shotwell of Columbia as the originator of the Kellogg pact, a few pages further on we are told that the Secretary of State who put forward this unqualified ideal of world peace has also been engaged in rewriting and renewing treaties of arbitration with some twenty-one foreign nations, in each of which there has been introduced a reservation in favor of the Monroe Doctrine, confirmation of which can be read in the Senate debates of January, 1929. Thus the author draws the inevitable conclusion that the United States does not intend to arbitrate any question arising out of the application of the Monroe Doctrine. The author here misunderstands the attitude of America. The Monroe Doctrine will remain effective because America is not a member of the League, and the arbitration treaties are made, not through the League of Nations, but independently of it.

If disarmament means the elimination of causes of war, the Monroe Doctrine, by excluding the colonization or seizure of South and Central American territory, is certainly eliminating causes of possible troubles. If the League of Nations can preserve peace in Europe as the author suggests, it will have done much for humanity.

This volume is enlightening and might serve as a most useful guide and suggestion book to politicians and club presidents, because of the presentation of the facts and of the unsuspected difficulties which the psychology of nations and the existing political sequelae of the treaty of Versailles continually present. It is to be hoped that the publishers may give to the public more books of this type if they can find minds as clear-sighted as Señor de Madariaga to write them.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

Goldsmith to His Friends

The Collected Letters of Oliver Goldsmith, edited by K. C. Balderston. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

A COMPLETE life of Oliver Goldsmith has yet to be written. Forster's voluminous biography deals skimpily, and as with legendary material, with all that precedes his settlement in London. Goldsmith was twenty-four years of age when he left Ireland to study medicine in Edinburgh: it is obvious that the man we know was formed in Ireland. A complete biography would be one in which the influences of that particular landscape and of a particular society—Irish Protestant society of the middle eighteenth century, made up of farmers, professional men, minor gentry, artisans—were shown as molding the genius of this vagrant, hard-working, soft-hearted, clear-sighted man of letters.

Miss Balderston's volume is a source-book for such a biography. It is true that the letters were not written until Goldsmith is out of Ireland: the first four are dated from Edinburgh. Still, these letters, full as they are of affection for the place and for the people whom he had grown up with, indicate some of the influences that had formed him. "Has George Conway put up a sign yet? Has John Binley left off drinking drams, or Tom Allen got a new wig?" His remembrance of such people suggests a whole section of his life. And when, writing to his brother-in-law, Daniel Hodson, he rails against

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himself for the interest that he takes in Ireland, declaring that the conversation there "is generally made up of a smutty toast or a bawdy song," and "the variety supported by some humble cousin, who has just folly enough to earn his dinner," and that he himself never received in Ireland anything "above civil contempt," and brought out of it nothing "except his brogue and his blunders," he reveals a great deal of his native background.

Only a few of the fifty-three letters given here have first publication in this book, and these few are notes which show nothing of Goldsmith's personality. But the great contribution which Miss Balderston makes is through her intelligent editing of the letters. The introduction to the collection is admirable, too, in so far as it establishes Goldsmith's relations with his family. For his father, for his elder brother Henry, for his brother-in-law Hodson, for his uncle Thomas Contarine, men who had education and character, he had love and esteem. For his sisters Jane and Catherine, for his brothers Maurice and Charles, he felt the merest sympathy. From his mother he was quite estranged: she was frugal and unsympathetic; there was, however, an honest downrightness about her which commands our respect. Miss Balderston interprets these relations to us in a way which seems very just. But we should have liked her to tell us something full and fresh about that remarkable man, Thomas Contarine, Oliver's uncle. It was this uncle who helped him through Edinburgh. Thomas Contarine had known the great Bishop Berkeley; no doubt he had talked to Oliver about this famous philosopher. Now Berkeley's philosophy included an ideal of the small, self-contained community. Was Contarine interested in this idea? Did he deliver it to Oliver with the authority of the great philosopher behind it, and did Oliver so obtain a sanction for his own belief in the charm of, and in the economic necessity for, the small community of cultivators

"Where every rood of ground maintained its man"?

Goldsmith was well grounded in French before he left his own locality. He must have understood Irish. He was familiar with Irish music. He was initiated into the popular lore of the countryside by his schoolmaster, Paddy Byrne. Probably it was his early experience in Ireland quite as much as his travels that made him, as a political observer, superior to Burke and to Dr. Johnson. He saw the game running tame about the environs of Paris, and knew that this was a symptom, not of social security, but of social decay. He announced the doom of a whole class in his own countryside when he wrote about the squirarchy whose members he knew: "Most of the bucks and bloods whom I left hunting and drinking and swearing and getting bastards I find are dead. Poor devils, they'd kicked the world before them. I wonder what the devil they kick now!"

Next to his letters to his relations, the most interesting in the collection are those he addressed to Coleman the Elder and David Garrick about his plays, The Good-Natured Man and She Stoops to Conquer. Goldsmith evidently had not much confidence in his stage technique. He begs Coleman to put The Good-Natured Man "into such a state as it may be acted." But Coleman was not at all helpful about She Stoops to Conquer. "For God's sake," Goldsmith writes, "take the play and let us make the best of it, and let me have the same measure at least as you have given as bad plays as mine." Finally he appeals from Coleman's to the judgment of the town.

After its first production, She Stoops to Conquer was revised and worked over. Some months afterward Goldsmith is

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writing to Garrick about another comedy: "I fancy I will make it a fine thing." Before this Garrick had expressed an interest in putting on The Good-Natured Man; Goldsmith was getting ready to revise it for him. "I will give you a new character in my comedy and knock out Lofty which does not do, and I will make such other alterations as you will direct." But Oliver had much hack work to do for John Nourse before he could get down to the writing of the new comedy or the revision of the old. He was working on Animated Nature when he wrote the last letter of his that is extant. "I have thought of extending the work into the vegetable and fossil kingdoms." Such, appropriately enough, was the last communication made by this hard-working man of letters who had touched on all manner of writing, and who had touched on nothing that he did not adorn.

PADRAIC COLUM.

Freedom and Food

America and the New Poland, by H. H. Fisher, with the collaboration of Sidney Brooks. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

ONE who witnessed "the miracle of the Vistula," where the tide of the Red armies was turned on the pivot of a single heroic act, and western Europe was saved from Trotzky's almost accomplished invasion—one who witnessed that epochal moment remembers most vividly what followed, even though he cannot forget the bullet-riddled body of the young Polish priest, Father Skorupka, and his saving of Poland on Lady Day, August 15, 1920. What followed was freedom—but freedom with starvation. And this horrible wave of hunger, death and disease, was only a repetition of what had gone before; the same tide of calamity had already swept back and forth over Poland for half a decade. The devitalization and internal bone-sapping destruction which Poland underwent during the entire war made the problem of literally saving the Polish nation from physical extinction, when it was at last resuscitated from political death, one of the great problems of the world war.

The record which Messrs. Fisher and Brooks set forth of the solving of this problem is clear and succinct, and it is likewise inspiring. Without a line of rhetorical glorifying, it shows America literally a spirit of mercy moving over a devastated land with healing power. God's will gave Poland freedom and saved her soul. America, through the agency of the American Relief Association, the American Red Cross and like organizations, gave Poland food and saved her body.

The three practical problems which the American relief agencies faced were, to get food, to distribute food, to save food. In the solution of these problems these agencies faced difficulties which were more than merely physical; there were other things to do besides securing food, transporting it, distributing it, conserving it. There were local factions, the natural outgrowth of generations of oppression, to be resolved into a unity which would overcome sectional suspicion. There was red tape, officialdom, pride, the common greed of the starving human animal. That the American relief agencies at work in Poland surmounted all these obstacles and succeeded finally in doing what they set out to do, is proof in this case not only of their unconquerable idealism, but of their genius for organization.

American idealism in full activity among the hungry masses of Poland frequently brought forth from a wondering and long oppressed people the exclamation, "Are the Americans fools?"

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The hard yoke of alien subjection had made it almost impossible for those people to understand why aid, food, medicines, should be given to them free, without expectation of return. But among the leaders of Poland the cry was not "why" but "how": "How can you Americans organize as you do?" From Pilsudski, Chief of State, down through the ranks, I heard this cry: "If only we could organize as you Americans do!"

Paderewski, Americanized Pole, was the first to reveal to Poland this genius of the American for organization. The work of the relief bodies, which followed Paderewski's régime, and for the bringing of which into Poland he was responsible, confirmed the lesson. The sum total of our effort in Poland, as the present volume reveals, was, then, not alone the saving of Poland bodily, but the giving to Poland a demonstration of organized, unified endeavor toward an idealistic as well as a practical end. It is not too much to say that the progress which the new Poland has made during the last few years is due, after the Polish national genius itself is accounted for, in very large measure to the work done in that country from 1919 to 1922 by our American relief agencies. Food was brought, food was distributed, native sources of food were preserved; millions of lives were saved, the terrifying child problem was solved; an ideal of wholly unselfish service to humanity was revealed, alive and active; and the further ideal of organized, unified, effective effort under powerful leadership, was demonstrated.

All of this comes out, although more by inference than by statement, in America and the New Poland. The book is a valuable record of a chapter in world history; and it is made the more valuable by the illuminating, carefully condensed history of the Polish nation with which the authors have prefaced their chronicle.

CHARLES PHILLIPS.

A Man Between Worlds

Dodsworth, by Sinclair Lewis. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

"HE WAS not a Babbitt," writes Mr. Lewis of his present hero. "To define what Sam Dodsworth was, at fifty, it is easiest to state what he was not." Both of these statements are unquestionably true. Sam Dodsworth is no Babbitt; neither is he a Kennicott, an Arrowsmith, an Elmer Gantry; he is, unfortunately, not even a Man Who Knew Coolidge. As a fictional invention he has none of the virtues of those vivid portraits. He just barely manages to give the impression that he is a trifle more than a stuffed shirt. We are informed, it is true, that he is an excellent fellow, that he has ideas and what is called vision. But the novel contains a wretchedly minute amount of actual evidence on these points. He is a bundle of negatives, a semi-articulate vacuum. Of course it is hard to define him. And it would probably have been easier to like him if his creator had hated or criticized him a little more. At fifty he has made his pile in streamlined automobiles. His wife forces him to purchase leisure, reflection and an extended tour of Europe, and she proceeds to make him exquisitely miserable.

Fran Dodsworth, the wife, is by way of contrast a striking satiric achievement. Beautiful, conceited, petty, domineering and stupid, she provides all the life that is to be found in the book. With such a thoroughly detestable creation, Mr. Lewis's peculiar talents find full play. Whenever Fran opens her mouth, the reader begins to shudder; he wants to stop his ears and turn away from the ghastly spectacle; yet he is intol-

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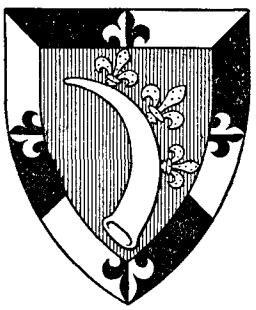

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erably fascinated. Her letters to her husband, of which there is a generous sprinkling, are likewise works of genius; they ring unbearably true, and make the reader blush in shame for the race of which both she and himself are members. Surely Fran Dodsworth is a masterpiece, a noteworthy adition to Mr. Lewis's now famous gallery of pilloried types. She presents a summary of nearly all the evils for which a pretty and moneyed modern woman has opportunities. Every reader will of course decide, according to his own experiences and prejudices, just how far she is typical of American ladies, or of civilized women, or of woman in general, or of mankind.

Well, Sam and Fran go to Europe, and discuss the relative merits and demerits of America and Europe with everyone they meet. The discussions are incredibly unintelligent and agonizingly interminable; they cover pages and pages of close print. We see the Europe of the tourist, of the social and arty climber, of the "rotogravure set"—Sam Dodsworth's one grand bon mot! Sam becomes more and more depressed, Fran tries more and more valiantly and irritatingly to become "European." Sam comes back to America to attend a Yale reunion. Fran meanwhile has been unfaithful (and proud of it) with an overdressed expatriate American Jewish gentleman. Sam rejoins her, they quarrel, he threatens a nasty divorce, and carries her off on more travels. In Berlin, Fran again proudly succumbs to a jolly, young, impoverished Austrian nobleman; she dismisses Sam with what he feels is barbarous cruelty. He makes feeble attempts to console himself in the Paris gutters. Finally he meets a more amiable lady. Fran's count disappoints her and she summons her husband. He obeys, but at last realizes how incorrigible she is. He goes back to his more amiable lady, indulging only in occasional idiotic sentimental yearnings over his lost, "childlike" Fran.

Obviously this is no adequate commentary on marriage, nor on Europe and America. Mr. Dodsworth and two continents merely supply a rich photographic background for the portrait of a hateful kind of person. The novel, written with all of its authors' immense skill in accurate detailed mimicry and dialogue, simply shows the inevitably wretched consequences when one detestable human being is associated with another who is weak and brainless.

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

From Coronal to Wreath

This Blind Rose, by Humbert Wolfe. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Incorporated. $1.50.

SOMETHING has happened to Humbert Wolfe in the last few years which can be summed up by saying that he is more deeply in love with love than ever, and (inevitably) more melancholy. "Those were a coronal," he writes of his former lyrics, "These are a wreath." The change, where it obviously reflects itself, is not for the better. It leads him into such mawkishness as

> "Rhyme endures because of love,
> not love because of rhyme,"

which is in sad contrast to the cynical humor with which he contemplated the same subject in the opening poem of his Unknown Goddess, published some years back. And when he is describing the last meeting of Darnley with Mary, Queen of Scots, it tempts him to try our good sense with such a hoodwinker as

> "So Darnley turned away from her, only keeping
> in his ears the sound of a fish from the water leaping."

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Certainly, Mr. Wolfe knows too much of the ways of this world, or as he might put it, of the hearts of men, to believe that one. But apparently he is not very skilful in regret. We are happy to report that he does not attempt it too often. When he is playing the ingenious, and metaphysical, lover, as in A Little Music, and The Star, or when he is disposing lightly of decay as in The Uncourageous Violet, or when he is at his prayers, as in Rue de Toutes Ames, or salutes the verities of nature as in Spring, and the fine merits of poetry, as in Song,

> "Aye! that is song—to beat the lark on the wing,
> and to be first in heaven, to tumble faster
> down the lost dreams than a stone . . ."

he is a better poet than he ever was, which is a good deal to say. And we say it reluctantly, since in other of these new poems his affectations of utterance were never more obtrusive, more repellant. His addiction to the narcotic of the feminine ending, his indulgence in recondite rhymes to an extent where they often cloud over whatever there may be in the poem—for this he deserves some round abuse. And since he has always asserted the right of man to grow, think, love, flower and die as he will, and of the artist to create on what pattern pleases him—for this reason also, come, let us bait him with the lattice and the mold.

VINCENT ENGELS.

What Doth It Profit a Man ?

A Great Man, by Walter Vogdes. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.00.

CALIFORNIA: age-long, the dignity of the redwoods had brooded over it, a land of calm. The gentle padres had built their missions in the spirit of the place, with no disturbance of the scene, no quickening of the tempo, no breaking of the quiet spell. Then came the Yankee breed at the call of gold; intent upon worldly gain, their hearts divided between cupidity and an adventurousness that recked little of the rights of man or nature; and they molded a civilization out of gold and blood. Disillusion, despair and sudden death were the end for many; but for some, abler, stronger or more crafty, there were riches beyond the dreams of Croesus. This book is the first half of a two-volume study dealing with the rise of one of that half-fabulous breed of Titans. Perhaps the rise and fall; for at the end of a book which is satisfyingly complete in itself, and yet suggestive of a needed sequel, one feels that relentless things, the penalty of cupidity, the penalty for forgetting God, will close with an iron grip upon David Frazer.

This is a first novel, but it surely establishes Walter Vogdes as one of those authentic annalists who are re-creating the American pageant and investing it with the glittering beauty of its stern romance. It is something of a poem, in the continental sense; prose though it be, it has design, the completeness of a pattern, the rounded sense of something fully wrought and realized. It is written in a prose that is at once nervous, fastidious and imperturbable. Here at least is a writer who knows exactly what he wishes to say, and how to say it. He knows that the business in hand is to tell a story, and he gets ahead with it, unseduced by temptations to wander in the morasses of psychological exploration. Yet for all this, he exposes the psychological springs of his characters. Indeed, the only exceptionable feature of the work is that the principal characters are psychologically labeled a bit too obviously and insistently. One can fancy that if Howells had taken his

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Silas Lapham as a young man and put him down in the exciting first days of San Francisco's rise, he would have found ways of indicating the roots of his character more deft than Walter Vogdes employs in forcing upon our attention that David Frazer's career was to be conditioned by the effects of childhood repressions and a fanatical Calvinistic concept of a favorite-playing God.

It is true, too, that the interweaving of two stories—the story of the city, formless, struggling, selfish, evil, mighty; and the story of a three-cornered love centering about a passionate and rather ruthless girl—is not altogether successful; it operates rather to the disadvantage of the love story, and yet it is that story which suddenly glows into the warmest and most human pages of the book. There is something of fantastic unreality about the progress of David to the stature of a "great man," possessed of lands and goods and gold, organizer of the propertied classes in a crisis, master of the mob. Perhaps the narrative is a bit stark, a bit thin, for all its indubitable mark of style a bit too journalistic. For underneath this sense of unreality, the substance of the story of David's rise is undeniably real. Big of frame, big if limited and groping of mind, with the trading instinct born in him, and possessed by a grim and ruthless determination to compensate for his poverty-stricken childhood by mastering wealth and power, David is doubtless a veracious symbol of the sort of man who transplanted Yankeeland to the sunset shores of the Pacific.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

Puzzled Prophecy

The Rediscovery of America, by Waldo Frank. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.00.

THIS book comes of the soul travail of a prophet who would be more than prophet only—a poet, or maker, longing to reintegrate, through the agency of an America captured and held by his own glowing vision, earth's tottering house of life, wherein the old world once essayed to dwell. Prophets have been described as painting some catastrophe likely to follow human sin in colors so appalling that men repent, and change their ways to forestall such event. Rarely, however, did the prophet of past history reject the old foundations and tried corner-stones, and offer plans for a new edifice, reared on a new site, and by methods of construction hitherto untried.

This is what Mr. Frank aspires to do. Can he set forth his vision for America in light so glorious that men will rise to follow it? As prophet he sees clearly why the fair promise old-world building held stands unfulfilled; the words in which he pictures modern disintegration could not, I think, be better chosen to convince his readers that, where causes are concerned, he speaks the truth. The book is full of truths, flashing like veins of metal in an ore. Also, it is inspiriting, because one feels its writer seeing to the sad heart of world corruption, yet able to take heart of grace himself. Darkness, for him, is heralding the dawn of a new day.

But will his light presage glad day for anybody else? In the fine second chapter, The Sense of the Whole, he tells us: "Man's religions have crumbled because the substructure—the order built from the revelation of the physical senses—was continuously shifting. . . . The past failure of religion is, then, largely the failure of past science. . . . The thinkers in psychological, political and social orders build from the debris of worlds a new foundation for the culminant whole—our true religion." A grand conception: but in the final chapter he attempts to indicate the ideas this true religion must em-

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body. His insight as to causes has led us to anticipate his offering an efficacious remedy for fatal sickness ably diagnosed. Will this anticipation be fulfilled?

He says: "What we need most is a human science. . . . We want: men who will act as conscious integers of the whole and who will thereby create it . . . in our America which is the paradigm of the world. The basis for a method to create such men is in Spinoza. . . . He leads to a method for acting God by *imaging God*. . . . *Modern psychology and science* are a series of integrations of Spinoza's proof that the whole must be human behavior. . . . Our need, since we would create the whole, is for a method whereby our values can be naturalized into terms of actual living. . . . None of our modern thought works out such a method. All modern science is a threshold."

Some Notes on Method indicate, for intellectuals, the way to follow Mr. Frank. A simpler mind can reach the same result by practising the precepts Christ enjoined, which have not been outgrown.

MARGARET KENDALL.

The Poilu Supreme

The Unknown Warrior, by Paul Raynal; translated by Cecil Lewis. New York: The Century Company. $2.50.

WE HAVE been expecting it for so long that its arrival takes us suddenly unawares. We have been too impatient. We should have realized that a work of art about the war, yet not of it—psychologically modern in its fathomless probing for the subconscious as well as the conscious truth, but in its style classical, simple, reticent—a dramatic story so personal and so tragic that it reaches the ultimate well-spring of the emotions, yet withdrawn to the high realm of intellect where human experience is refined to philosophy—we should have realized that such a creation could not arise from the war days themselves, but would come in its proper time, when the horror and heroism of those mad times had filtered through some great man's soul. This has happened in the soul of the Frenchman Paul Raynal, and the result is the drama, The Unknown Warrior.

It was first produced as Le Tombeau Sous l'Arc de Triomphe at the Comédie Française, and has since been received triumphantly all over Europe. It comes to America first in this beautiful translation by Cecil Lewis. It has the unassuming grandeur of its title. There are but three characters, a soldier, his fiancée and his father. The poilu has returned on leave from the front to marry his sweetheart, but discovers on his arrival—what he had feared—a wire summoning him to return in four hours. When in the course of these four tense hours it is revealed that in order to come this once to those he loves he has pledged himself to an undertaking which means certain death on his return to the fighting, the souls of all three are laid bare in a maelstrom of variant emotions that is the height of art, beautiful, well-nigh unbearable tragedy. O'Neill in this country is the only dramatist who has approached Raynal's power to fathom the depths that harbor the eternal unuttered truths. But among other advantages Raynal displays a more disciplined sense of the essentials in drama, and a philosophy—stoical, founded on hatred of war but acceptance of it, as of other evils—that is more elevating and universal than O'Neill's. This reviewer is convinced that The Unknown Warrior will prove to be an abiding landmark in the drama of our century.

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A Brilliant Miss

Back to Stay, by Jonathan Leonard. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

MR. LEONARD, a brilliant newcomer in the field of the novel, has succeeded in writing a very puzzling book about a secluded New England village of the eighties. It is puzzling not only in the obvious sense that, with the fantastic courage of the new kind of realist, he has deliberately eschewed selectiveness, and his material has, in consequence, the unmanageable and almost witless variety only to be found in a cross-section of actual life; nor in the further sense that his observations are rendered with such stripped and spare impersonality, such distillation and shrinkage of the full narrative manner, that reading them is a severe intellectual exercise. Back to Stay is puzzling because, in spite of the penetration of many of its readings of human motive and the quite unquestionable distinction of many of its passages, one cannot settle in one's own mind that the manner of the book is really consonant with its matter, nor that its beginning is really consonant with its end.

The core of the story is found in the quarrel between Zenas, the patriarch of the Wardon tribe, and Dixi, his youngest son. The father, despite his own large license in matters of morality, had condemned the son's youthful lapse so fiercely that he had refused to let him marry the girl he had seduced, or acknowledge their child. The son, gifted but erratic, sardonically unmoral but unexpectedly honest, returns to the village after a business failure and tries for a reconciliation. It seems to have been the author's original purpose to analyze the cruelty, the superstition and crapulous tyranny which will breed in a community infected in soul by a too exclusive attention to the Old Testament and virtually shut off from the currents of civilized thought. But cutting across this purpose, one feels the counter-purpose of showing how the love of father and son triumphed over all obstacles; nay, before Back to Stay is ended, one is disturbed by the gentle beginnings of the suggestion that hearts of gold often beat beneath the roughest jackets.

It is because the instances Mr. Leonard musters in support of his original intention are so appallingly convincing that one's disconcertion, in the end, is so real. Even through the methodic externalism to which he has set himself, the sternly denuded approach which refuses all recognition to emotion, and confines itself to recording actions, words and certain diagrammatic ratiocinations, one catches the evil and frustration and misery of the lives in River Bend. There is the picture of Zenobia, the medium, depraved in youth, now a writhen old woman yelling and moaning in trances in the cellar; there is Esther Stone, who might have been a wise leader or an artist or even a saint, forced by spite and ignorance into the mold of a philosophic drab; there is Ruth, separated from child and lover and kept in a perpetual agony of fear that Zenas will drive her father from his mortgaged farm to starve in the streets; there is Zenas himself, preparing to sacrifice his own illegitimate son to Jehovah, and stayed only by an accident. All of this comes to one so plainly on a certain level of implication that when Mr. Leonard begins to deflect it in the direction of a sunny dénouement, one is comically taken aback.

Mr. Leonard might reply that life is preposterous enough to follow any pattern, even the pattern of the happy ending. One can only answer, in turn, that the artist is required by the reader, and justly required, to work within the limits of a self-conceived unity—if not the unity of selection and composition, then the unity of interpretation or mood. James Joyce, in A

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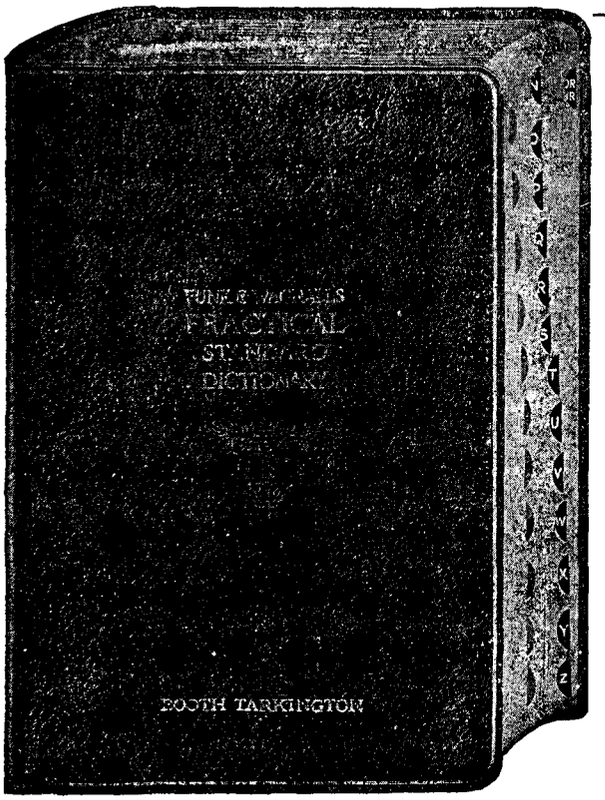

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NEXT WEEK

It has been a long time since we printed an article by Padraic Colum. He has been so busy writing books, lecturing on his favorite topics and moving back to New Canaan that his work for the magazines has been sadly neglected. . . . But next week he will appear positively, with a fine paper on THE NEW IRISH PAINTERS, some of whose work has recently been on exhibition in New York . . . . The Celt has always been an apostle, and CATHOLIC ACTION is a lay apostolate. This important subject will be treated authoritatively by the Rev. John J. Harbrecht, who has been professor of Social Ethics at St. Mary's Seminary, Cincinnati, since he completed his studies abroad. . . . In the ever interesting domain of international politics, few subjects are more interesting than SEA POWER. Some aspects of this are dealt with in a paper by John Carter who, we are happy to report, is now writing frequently for The Commonweal. . . . If things go well, we shall likewise offer to the really wide-awake readers of this country an article entitled HEROES OF MODERN FRANCE. The author, Father C. C. Martindale, needs no introduction to those who follow important contemporary literature about religion. This particular paper is one of the most striking discussions of French Catholicism we have ever seen—and it is obvious that all men are brothers under the skin. . . . In a lighter vein, Mr. Alan Devoe will describe his multiform experiences as an AUTOGRAPH COLLECTOR without a great deal of money. We do not expect Mr. Newton to learn much from this paper, but the rest of us will profit considerably. . . . There are other things we might mention, but for the present we shall not.

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, or Elizabeth Madox Roberts, in The Time of Man, have a lesson for Mr. Leonard there. They are no more artificially selective than he, but they have been kept by a sound instinct from employing upon material that cries aloud for fusion this parody of a classic objectivity. They understand that, if the diverse and intractable impressions compassed in one human experience are to be accepted without abatement, they must be fused, in art as in life, within the unity of one perfectly conceived, perfectly rendered consciousness.

MARY KOLARS.

Democratic Publishing

The Memoirs of J. M. Dent, 1849-1926, with some additions by Hugh R. Dent. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

THE creator of the Temple Classics and Everyman's Library, and the founder of the Temple Press, Letchworth, was not a discoverer of new talent, and perhaps because of this he cannot be placed in the front rank of British publishers. But that he was one of the greatest forces in the spread of culture throughout the English-speaking world is incontestable.

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(My commission expires March 30, 1930.)

had put their cultured hands to the task of reconstruction of a long-neglected literature.

Among Catholics the poems and hymns of the middle-ages had always preserved their integrity through use in the missals and breviaries; nor had continental savants ever forgotten the great traditions surviving from the ages of faith. They were followed in England by Sir Alexander Croke's work and Archbishop Trench's excerpts from sacred poetry, marred though they were by the omission of whatever was doctrinally distasteful to him. There were also A. S. Walpole's Early Latin Hymns (1922) through which may be traced the originals of many admired numbers of the English Hymnal.

In America we have had, in 1925, various collections of Latin mediaeval poetry by such scholars as C. H. Beeson, C. U. Clark, J. B. Game, and K. P. Harrington, evincing an interest which has resulted in the foundation of the excellent review, Speculum, sponsored by the Mediaeval Academy of America.

Professor Gaselee's Oxford Book of Mediaeval Latin Verse ranges in its contents from Saint Hilary's Hymnum Dicat Turba Fratrum, A. D. 367, to the anonymous hymn Intuamur Enixam of 1500. These bound a wealth of poetry of high order; the sense of this literature is intellectual for the most part, classical in its clear atmosphere and rarely temperamental and insouciant in the romantic modern sense. There is a serene loveliness like that of a starry night, a philosophic calmness, in this singing, sacred for the most part and only occasionally profane. Saint Hilary, Saint Ambrose, Prudentius, Sedulius, Venantius Fortunatus, Saint Columba, Paul the Deacon, Rabanus Maurus, Saint Notker Balbulus, Peter Abelard, Wido, Hildebert, Saint Bernard of Morlaux and Saint Thomas Aquinas are among the great names of this mediaeval Parnassus, flanked on every side by the inspired scribes, monks, nuns and prelates whose humility is eternally preserved under the title of Anonymous. It is a charming and convenient book of reference and recollection.

RODERICK GILL.

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